ALEXANDER THE GREAT IN BRITISH POLITICS AND THOUGHT (C.1660-1800)

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ABSTRACT

The profound relationship between Alexander the Great and British political discourse has been documented in the nineteenth century (for example, Vasunia 2007 and Hagerman 2009). Yet, beyond articles covering the historiography of the Scottish Enlightenment (Briant 2005) or case studies of his particularly negative repute in post-Restoration literature (Brauer 1980 and Wild 2004), little research has been conducted into the eighteenth-century Alexander. Focussing on the period between the Restoration and the Napoleonic Wars, this thesis explores how Alexander was used in discourse on martial achievement, heroic virtue, conquest and empire in British political thought. Concomitantly, it will discuss how various discourses, writers and imitators effected the conception of Alexander.

The first chapter introduces a range of political appropriations of Alexander that emerged during the Restoration. The second chapter focuses on the discourse on civic virtue in English writing from the 1690s to the 1760s, to understand why Alexander's character and achievements were criticised. The third chapter assess the deployment of Alexander in historical writing as a vexed and protean model for thinking through the ideologies of empire, from the 1690s until the 1790s. The fourth chapter investigates the British reaction to Napoleon Bonaparte, and particularly his invasion of Egypt. A final concluding chapter provides some reflections on the repute of Alexander in the nineteenth century. The evidence used in this thesis includes acts of Alexander *imitatio* by British and non-British figures, a range of different types of *comparatio* in drama and poetry, and works of history.

CONTENTS

0. THE PROBLEM WITH ALEXANDER

Pierre Briant invoked Arnaldo Momigliano's famous inaugural lecture on George Grote and contemporary problems in Greek history when he announced a "crisis" in the study of Alexander the Great:

> today we can say the same [as Momigliano did] about Alexander, whose history has also reached a crisis-point as it has not been sufficiently stimulated by the methodological advances that Greek history has, in the meantime, been able to adopt.[1]

Briant defined the major symptoms of the crisis as remarkable bibliographical 'inflation', with few attempts to present genuinely 'new' work (i.e. innovative as opposed to just 'recent').[2] Instead, Briant argues, when presenting their portrait, scholars have been content to hide behind a common disclaimer: '"every historian has his/her Alexander."'[3] A way out of the current state of stagflation, Briant concludes, lies in the study of eighteenth-century historiography, an approach exemplified by the work of Momigliano and pursued by Briant in the last decade.[4] This thesis will adopt the Momigliano-Briant premise that the future prosperity of the discipline depends partly on paying greater attention to the hinterland of the modern Alexander. It is a study of Alexander's reception in Anglo-British politics and historical writing from circa 1660 to 1800.[5]

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[1] Briant 2009a: 79. The inaugural essay is available in the collection of Momigliano (1994). Briant (2005: 1) previously noted in similar vein that 'bibliographical inflation' does not equal intellectual progress. He then expanded on his thoughts in Briant (2010a: 153-185).

[2] Briant (2010a) notes: 'this exponential growth should not lead one to think that all these *recent* works are truly *new*.' The last quarter of a century in particular has seen scholarly works on Alexander grow beyond a scale that could be manageably synthesized by even a specialist. Briant, for instance, notes the inexorable rate of monographs published in the years following Oliver Stone's 2004/5 film. For a sense of the 'exponential' growth, see Briant (2010a) and the collated tables of recent works including 10 collections of essays in 10 years.

[3] Briant 2009a: 78.

[4] Briant 2009a: 79-80.

[5] The lack of detailed explanation of the nature and consequences of the crisis, or of a roadmap for co-opting the study of historiography to solve it may be partially responsible for the failure to proselytize. Momigliano did at least sketch out five aspects of the crisis, but his cure is only exemplified in his analysis of Grote and is not articulated directly. See Briant (2005: 1) on the importance of the study of the Enlightenment view of Alexander.

This introduction will diagnose the causes and nature of the "crisis" and articulate the case for focusing on the eighteenth-century reception of Alexander as part of a solution (sections 0.1 and 0.2). Briant has sensibly observed that no single scholar can dare to attempt a bibliographical assessment of the current state of such a vast discipline. What follows will be selective, but will continue a useful debate on the problems with the contemporary study of Alexander. The major themes, evidence and methodology of this thesis is outlined in section 0.3.[6] Finally, a brief overview of Alexander's appearance in literature and politics from antiquity to the Renaissance is provided in order to introduce the various sources for Alexander that seventeenth-century writers would have used (section 0.4).

0.1. WRITING LIVES NOT HISTORY

> Therein lies the problem: trying to separate the real or historical Alexander from the legendary.[7]

Ian Worthington's declamation of the dubious historical value of the ancient sources encapsulates the 'problem' posed by Alexander to historians: when seeking the "actual" man, one must beware of various forms of interference. The problem inherited by contemporary scholarship begins with a dearth of narrative accounts from verifiable sources external to the campaign.[8] It is compounded by the lacuna of the missing campaign narratives themselves, written during Alexander's lifetime or in the immediate decades after his

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[6] Since Briant (2009a: 79) asked for a work to survey the entire 'historiography of Alexander from the seventeenth to the twentieth century', the chronological limits and the specific focus of the current work will also be outlined in section 0.3. This is primarily to avoid the thesis becoming lost in a capacious area of study and duplication with other work in progress. In 2010, Briant (2010: 161 n. 22) stated his desire to publish his own work on Alexander in the eighteenth century. Briant published his *Alexandre des Lumières. Fragments d'histoire européen* in October 2012 when a full draft of this thesis had already been completed. It is anticipated that there will be some overlap, but unfortunately this could not be accommodated in the current work.

[7] Worthington 2004: 2.

[8] The archaeology is also patchy and difficult to coordinate across the vast distances of the campaign.

death in 323 B.C.[9] Historical studies rely upon the much later "big five" narrative accounts. These later texts relate to the missing sources in opaque ways, do not always agree about the events of the campaigns, and hold strikingly different opinions of the character of Alexander.[10] Brian Bosworth has observed, however, that the period under consideration is well-attested by the standards of ancient history.[11] This rich set of sources, moreover, led to many significant works of source criticism by pre-eminent scholars of Alexander over the mid-to-late twentieth century.[12] But the drive to 'peel back the layers of historical material', espoused by source-critical approaches, has not offered an agreed understanding of Alexander's life and character.[13] If the framework for the campaigns is generally well known, the complex source transmission and impossibility of corroborating the sources has meant that the historical veracity of many events and aspects of the campaign have been hotly contested.[14] The material pertaining to the character and action of Alexander has been shaped significantly by literary tropes or philosophical traditions. Given the cultural context for most of our surviving authors, one critic has even argued that we have 'essentially a Roman story' of Alexander.[15] At the very least, what is transmitted to us is a detail-rich, yet culturally and politically embedded reading of the conqueror.

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[9] These include the accounts of Nearchus (Alexander' admiral), Onesicritus (his pilot), Callisthenes (the "official" campaign historian) and the *Ephemerides Alexandri*. The latter include Ptolemy (the king of Egypt), Cleitarchus and Aristobulus (presumably a scholar at Alexandria). All of the above are used by later sources either indirectly or directly. For a full overview see Heckel and Yardley (2004).

[10] See section 0.4 for an introduction to the sources for Alexander relevant to the eighteenth century. As Mossé (2004: 5) expresses it: 'in the course of the four or five centuries that separates them from our hero, the legend surrounding him had been growing even richer and the image, or rather images, that they have transmitted to us are clearly marked by that enrichment.' For a full account of these, the lost more contemporary historians and other later authors, see Heckel and Yardly (2004: xx-xxix).

[11] Bosworth 1996: 65.

[12] For instance the monographs of Bosworth (1996 & 1988) and Hammond (1983 & 1993) or Bosworth (1980 & 1995) on Arrian.

[13] Spencer 2002: xvi.

[14] See Carney 2000. It can either be suspected or proved that episodes, characters and events are being manipulated according to the author's interests or those of their source, or even that the source material they purport to be based upon is spurious. See, for example, Anson (1996) for the debate on the *Ephemerides Alexandri* or Pearson (1954/5).

[15] Spencer 2002: xiv.

The historian is presented with choices between sources which they suspect for a variety of differing reasons. Circular arguments are prevalent, as is the inevitable deployment of subjective reasoning in order to establish the veracity of character and narrative.[16]

Although Bosworth underplays the particular problems of having a "late" collection of sources for Alexander, calling a crisis merely in response to source problems would dissolve the study of the ancient world. A glance at the recent trends in Alexander biography is useful for formulating a more precise definition of the crisis. Adopting the notion that Alexander's character can be known via a set of problematic texts, the genre hinges upon forming a sense of the protagonist from selective readings of certain episodes or from certain preferred sources.[17] Once, W.W. Tarn's benevolent, uniting conqueror was the predominant model for Alexander, but the last fifty years has seen the emergence of the paranoid tyrant, the destroyer of nations, the Homeric idealist, the selfish Achilles, informed by a variety of interpretations of his sexuality, culture and leadership style.[18] With such obvious differences in presentation of character, any savvy biographer has long been forced to acknowledge difficulties in the pursuit of the definitive portrait of Alexander.[19] Robin Lane Fox once called his biography a 'search, not a story'. Paul Cartledge wistfully cautions, 'my answers, any answers, must necessarily be provisional, tentative and more or less speculative. For Alexander had been handed down to us ultimately as an enigma, thanks

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[16] Spencer (2002) is heavily critical of this approach as is Carney (2000).

[17] These shape the material according to personal assumptions or preferences. Elizabeth Carney (2000) argues strongly that biographical approaches are essentially the transcription of a certain 'Alexander' according to the whim of a particular scholar, and gives an outline of the 'usual method' of reading Alexander. Source criticism by extension can be reduced to a method of supporting such claims. See the classic deconstruction of Tarn by Badian (1958) and more recently Holt (1999).

[18] See Worthington (2004: 326-31) for instance. Acknowledging this trend has become *de rigueur* and many recent biographies carry a bibliographical note or essay surveying or sampling the many Alexanders – see Cartledge in his introduction to Mossé (2004: vii) and Thomas (2007).

[19] See Briant (2010a) for an overview of scholarly works.

above all to the inadequate nature of our sources of evidence.'[20] A humble authorial approach to one's subject is a rare boon for the reader, yet the requirement to begin any academic endeavour with an overt statement of defeat is remarkable.[21]

The nature of the crisis is revealed in the author's response to the defeat of scholarship, having already acknowledged that there are fundamental problems with studying the historical Alexander.[22] What replaces finding the "real" Alexander as the premise of so many new works? Cartledge offers a defence of his work, despite claiming 'no need for special justification':

> What is needed, then, and I have aimed to provide, is a book that does full justice to Alexander's extraordinary achievement, while at the same time respecting the limits of evidence and of the historian's craft. I have attempted to address that achievement both in its own terms (including some tentative probing into Alexander's deep psyche) and in terms of its subsequent impact.[23]

Despite his own scepticism, he still feels compelled to tilt at understanding such an awe-inspiring figure; the book is partly a totem to Alexander's legacy and partly a biography of a man that Cartledge feels cannot be pinned down.[24] Similarly, after listing Alexander's special achievements, his heroism, his fearfulness and his legend as ample cause for the work, Worthington aims to use biographical format to reassess this or that 'particular problem or controversy' and within this format to 'be provocative

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[20] Lane Fox 1973: 11. Cartledge 2004: 6-7.

[21] For other examples of this kind of formulation see also Worthington (2004: 303) who notes that 'there is no consensus of opinion on Alexander. There never can be, and perhaps there ought not to be. Ultimately, does it even really matter?' Cartledge repeats his scepticism in the introduction to Mossé (2004: vii), as does the author herself: 'it is difficult to pass any judgment on the man himself, his behaviour and his aspirations.' (Mossé 2004: 6)

[22] This is manifest currently in a favoured trope of contemporary writers who consistently note the vast and divergent flavours of Alexander available to readers of the scholarly or popular literature. For example, Worthington 2004: 303.

[23] Cartledge 2004: iv.

[24] Mossé (2004: 6) echoes the need to produce a biography based upon the weight of his achievements, specifically due to their progressive value: Alexander 'invites the historian to ponder the role that particular individuals play in the evolution of civilisations.'

and to challenge traditional approaches to Alexander'.[25] 'Approaches' in this case clearly means "interpretations", for Worthington does not address or adapt his methodology. There is an imperative to transcribe Alexander and a desire to say something 'new' (or should that be 'recent') about Alexander's character. But innovation is clearly limited to a matter of personal emphasis within the existing methodology for historical biography of Alexander. These biographies acknowledge then disregard the existential doubt rife throughout the genre, and do not countenance any scope for challenging their own method or that of others. The crisis is most apparent in the continuing absence of any methodological innovation arising from an acknowledged scholarly stalemate.

Instead, biography has become an arena for transcribing an explicitly whimsical portrait, using various motifs as a weathervane for Alexander's character as a whole (for example, his alcoholism, his *pothos* or passion for hunting). The questionable veracity of the sources has liberated biographers to write anew with unabashed subjectivity. After paying due respect to the limits of the evidence, Worthington states brazenly that 'in this book I present my Alexander ... he was a genius when it came to strategy and tactics.' Similarly his unique approach to Alexander 'is that his pretension to personal divinity is the key to the motives and actions of his reign'.[26] Cartledge accepts the validity of previous interpretations before presenting his own:

> My book will not minimize the influence of these [previously highlighted] factors on Alexander's outlook, personality and aims. But it will lay even more stress on his predilection, or rather grand passion, for hunting game.[27]

There always seems room for another reading of Alexander. Once, scholarship trawled earnestly through the evidence to find the "actual"

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[25] Worthington 2004: xiv.
[26] Worthington 2004: xiii; 6. Cartledge 2004: ix.
[27] Cartledge 2004: ix. For a fuller list of biographical portraits, see the 'Bibliographic Essay' in Worthington (2004: esp., 326-331).

Alexander. Contemporary biography has returned to the Plutarchian conceit: using the *πρᾶγμα βραχὺ* (slightest deed) to render a topic that needs no special pleading.[28] The stated methodology and intellectual calibre of recent biographers belie any attempt to dismiss them as populist and therefore irrelevant. Claims, such as those made by Worthington, that 'this book is a serious and authoritative one', show that they wish to represent the sharp end of Alexander studies.[29] Alexander biography is flourishing, yet by its own admission, it is moribund as a vehicle for historical study.[30] This diagnosis confirms that given by Briant: there is bibliographic inflation, but little innovation.

0.2. "ADDING" AFTERLIFE TO ALEXANDER

The hands of previous writers and ancient societies are manifest in our extant sources. Consequently, Alexander exemplifies how our understanding of ancient figures is contingent upon previous "readers". Charles Martindale defines the diachronic construction of "textual"[31] meaning as follows:

> 'Our current interpretations of ancient texts, whether or not we are aware of it, are, in complex ways, constructed by the chain of receptions through which their continued readability has been effected. As a result we cannot get back to any originary meaning wholly free of subsequent accretions.'[32]

The methodological impasse in the discipline is a consequence of recognising that previous receptions have occluded the historical Alexander, without understanding the full implication of Alexander's 'chain of receptions'.

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[28] This type of formulation is striking similar to the terms of self-justification used by both Arrian (*Anab*. Preface) and Plutarch (*Vit. Alex*. 1.1-2).
[29] Worthington 2004: xiii.
[30] Briant 2009: 78.
[31] Martindale (2008: 3-4) notes a broad use of the term to include the bundle of texts and stories that surround an ancient figure: 'I am using the word in the extended poststructuralist sense that could mean a painting, or a marriage ceremony, or a person, or a historical event.'
[32] Martindale (1993: 7).

Scholarship has addressed Alexander's contingency by attempting to remove what Worthington terms the 'legendary' or the obvious "accretions" on our sources, such as Alexander's meeting with the Amazons.[33] For much of the twentieth century and beyond, Alexander has been subjected to a process of "sifting" in order to separate the "real" from the mythical.[34] Recently, the intellectual influences of the surviving sources have attracted detailed attention with focus upon authorial intent and methodology - for example, challenging genre boundaries between the Alexander "Romance" and the historical sources.[35] Studies have also shown Alexander to be implicated in Hellenistic or Roman ideas about monarchy and empire. Finally, scholars have illustrated the literary motifs and topoi that render our protagonist.[36] A greater understanding of the 'chain of readers' has revitalised our understanding of the surviving sources, but has exposed further the extent to which we have inherited an Alexander made up of literary artifice, and embedded in cultural and political polemics.

Worthington's problem statement demonstrates that this process has resulted in the abandonment of the historical Alexander. More significantly, the discussion in section 0.1 illustrates that failure has not been couched in epistemology, but in terms of degree. The sources are *too* corrupt for Alexander to emerge, but the method is considered conceptually sound.[37] Martindale's model of textual meaning, conversely, disavows the

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[33] See n. 7.

[34] Initially this was conducted through *quellenforschung*, an approach that goes back to Pearson (1960) and continued up until the eighties, for instance in Hammond (1983).

[35] Recent scholarship on the Curtius in his authorial context, see Baynham (1998). For Diodorus' method of shaping his history more generally, see Sacks (1994) and Sulimanli (2011). In his analysis of Plutarch's *Life of Alexander*, Whitmarsh (2002) eschews any sense of the historical figure and focuses on the writer's construction of Alexander as an actor constructed to explore the vexed Greco-Roman cultural space of the late-first century.

[36] For comparison between Arrian's style and that of the Romance, see McInerney (2007). See Spencer (2002) for Alexander and Rome. For a treatment of literary artifice in all the sources, Carney (2000) adopts a bifocal approach incorporates the reading of Alexander's interactions with his subordinates as authorial confections, but also makes an attempt to identify moments during which Alexander's can be seen curating his own myth.

[37] Heavily critical of the problems in *quellenforschung*, recently scholars have studied source for Alexander with greater attention to their literary and political context, see Bosworth and Baynham (2000) and Baynham (2001).

fundamental goal of the "sifting" process. "Sifting" assumes an "original" exists, and that there is an unadulterated Alexander which can be uncovered. This is paradoxical for an area of study aware of the manifold relativisms involved in the transmission of Alexander to the contemporary world, and the many subjective responses to his life in modern scholarship.[38] Martindale evinces that Alexander will always be 'a yielded truth - and not a given one – that is realised in discussion and consensus with others.'[39] In light of the myriad interpretations of his character in modern scholarship, there has been an acceptance of this assertion *on grounds of practicality*, but no attempt to address the epistemological consequences of his 'yielded' readability.

The solution provided by the study of Alexander's reception stems from an under-acknowledged implication of Martindale's definition of readability (as far as the study of Alexander is concerned).[40] Despite acute awareness of the problems caused by various responses to Alexander in ancient and modern writing, recent scholarship has rarely addressed the nature and consequences of Alexander's malleable image *between* antiquity and the contemporary world.[41] Diana Spencer notes:

> Just by writing the name "Alexander the Great" we are invoking a weighty burden of cultural baggage ranging from imperialist dreams of world domination and military glory to a vision of a mythical quest.[42]

The 'anxieties, interests and enthusiasms' of Rome shaped the image of Alexander in our extant sources, but Alexander is as much the product of the

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[38] Martindale 2006: 2. Martindale argues that any historical study that believes it can 'attempt through the accumulation of supposedly factual data to establish the-past-as-it really-was' must be 'conceptually flawed'

[39] Martindale 2006: 4.

[40] See Stoneman (1994; 2008), Spencer (2002) on *The Roman Alexander*, Carey (1956) on the Medieval Alexander or Ray and Potts (2007) for Alexander and India and many others.

[41] For discussions of source problems without any mention of reception issues, see Thomas (2007: 1-8) and Anson (2013: 1-11). Anson work seeks to address the major academic controversies surrounding Alexander, but has no mention of his repute beyond antiquity.

[42] Spencer (2002: 1) Maria Wyke (2007: 2) writes similarly for the only other figure from the ancient world with a matching *nachlebung*: 'Julius Caesar was a Roman leader of flesh and blood who existed in real time. He is also a quasi-mythic protagonist of Western culture.'

same concerns as they shaped his image in post-classical societies.[43] The discipline has failed to explore their nature and address the effects that these receptions have had upon the current state of Alexander.

One possible solution to the problem of Alexander is to give up on the "man" entirely and consider this thesis simply as an analysis of Alexander's role in post-enlightenment politics. This is certainly an important outcome of the current thesis, but not its only intention. It has also been suggested that reception studies are a way out of the relativist trap: by becoming aware of the accretions of previous receptions, one can strip away the effects of other readers on Alexander's reputation.[44] Such an approach is the battle between the "historical" and "mythic" followed by source critical approaches transposed to the eighteenth-century: various culturally-embedded readings of Alexander are exposed so he can be returned to an originary state. Martindale evinces that this is a new positivism. How can we ever know if Alexander has been stripped? Will Alexander emerge from his eighteenth-century carapace? To be certain would require the very identification of an "original" Alexander that has already eluded scholarship, and since we address previous readings of Alexander on our own terms, we inevitably leave his image augmented with our own subjective interpretations. [45]

Although Martindale warns that we can never know 'if one had truly stripped away all the layers of "anachronism"' from texts, he also posits that we might not want to.[46] We cannot "sift" in order to tell the past as it was, but we can elucidate the 'chain of receptions' that constitute Alexander's 'readability'. The discipline needs to refocus attention away from turgid arguments between what is legendary and what is real; one way to do this is to address the relevance of post-classical receptions to our own reading of

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[43] Spencer (2009: 251).
[44] Hardwick (2003: 3) has argued this is a valid and desirable aim of reception: '[reception has] proved valuable in that it has enabled people to distinguish more readily between the ancient texts, ideas and values of the society that appropriated them.' See also Rowe (2003:3).
[45] As Diana Spencer (2002: xiii) also asserts: 'we, as readers and writers, are all complicit in the creation of Alexander, and becoming involved in this discourse means becoming involved in the perpetual cycle of recreating Alexander.'
[46] Martindale 2006: 12.

Alexander. This thesis, therefore, is conceived as part of a process of "adding" to our knowledge of Alexander: it is the study of how various eighteenth-century receptions have contributed to the wrestled and wrung portrait of Alexander received by the contemporary world.[47] Biographers and those working on the literary artifice, authorial context or post-classical receptions all enhance our understanding of the way in which we see Alexander. But Alexander is a multivalent figure existing in many different times and social spaces, all of which impact upon our current view. The discrete pockets of solipsism that emerge from biography are a symptom of crisis, but not because of their format or interpretation. It is because they display a limited conception of where to find "new" things to say about how we see Alexander.

Briant's demand for a thorough trawl through the eighteenth century has *prima facie* value because this period is part of the event-horizon of the genesis of his image. Nevertheless, further justification is required given that it accounts for only one section of a long and polyvalent afterlife.[48] The eighteenth-century Alexander is an under-examined, yet important, portion of the construction of Alexander as a contemporary figure of study. Briant has restated Momigliano's comments on the significant contribution of scholarship before Gustav Droysen's landmark *Alexander der Grosse* (1833). His thoughts and the small number of recent attempts to understand eighteenth-century historiography on Alexander have either been ignored or the consequences of their conclusions under-investigated.[49] The latter claim can justifiably be extended to the extensive list of works by Briant himself on the historiography of Alexander. There has been little attempt to understand the importance of the intellectual trends that shaped the emergence of

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[47] The term "'adding'" is taken from Martindale (2003: 13). In what is a coincidental microcosm of the issues of reception, I read into its use a whole methodological programme before, on a subsequent re-read, realizing that Martindale's usage was perhaps more throw away than this manifesto warrants. The definition, therefore, is my own.

[48] It should be noted that what follows is a case for the current work, not a case against other solutions or important contexts for Alexander.

[49] Briant (2009: 79). See Vopilhac-Auger (2002) on Alexander's place in Enlightenment scholarship.

Alexander as a figure of historical study, nor their influence on subsequent scholarship.[50]

In her book on *The Roman Alexander,* Diana Spencer identifies the influence of the Roman Alexander, based upon the fact that most of our ancient sources belong to the period of the Roman Empire. She argues that 'the Alexander we know and reinterpret is himself a "Roman" construct, a product of Roman sensibilities and worldview.'[51] Spencer's keenness to explore the Roman legacy can be extended in adapted form to support the study of other locales for Alexander's genesis. Many different periods can hold claim to have been, at one time or another, a crucible in which Alexander was forged. Copyists and Romance writers in the late Middle Ages, for example, confronted literary forms of Alexander fashioned in Hellenistic Egypt. This is not to accuse Spencer of reducing Alexander to being simply "Roman" (for she does not), but to demonstrate that there is relativity inherent in any identification of a primary context from which Alexander's portrait primarily emerges. This thesis will broaden the search for what constitutes "source" material and focus on an important context for the depiction of his life and image.[52] Spencer's specific criterion for studying the Roman Alexander is the significant contribution Rome makes to the literary record. The eighteenth century was when modern historiography of Alexander emerged and, as Briant has shown, current debates – such as that on the transformative effects of Alexander's conquests - are still broadly set within the boundaries and nomenclatures once employed by eighteenth-century scholars, and dictated by interests central to their own times.[53] The

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[50] See Briant 2005 for example. Briant has built a considerable reputation on such works, but recent studies of historiography still focus upon the nineteenth century (Vasunia 2007, Hagerman 2009), while the attention to eighteenth century historiography has come from a view of Classics and modern imperialism (i.e. Vlassopoulos 2010). A useful comparison is with the acclaim and influence of his work on the scholarly study of the Persian Empire and the repute of Darius III particularly.

[51] Spencer 2002: x.

[52] This is perfectly keeping with her identification of the flexibility and consistent malleability of the paradigm of Alexander.

[53] See Briant 2009a: 80.

following section further discusses how the eighteenth century is notable and underexplored hinterland for the contemporary Alexander and what can be achieved through studying it.[54]

0.3. Argument, Themes, Method and Structure

The choice of the eighteenth century is driven by a lacuna in the coverage of Alexander scholarship. The end point of circa 1800 is dictated partly by the weight of studies on historiography, classics and imperialism that focus upon the nineteenth century.[55] Often encompassing, but not limited to questions of the role of history and imperialism, most of the study of the historiography of the ancient world has focused predominantly upon works after the late-eighteenth century.[56] In the past decade, the eighteenth century has been recognised as an underexplored hinterland of the relationship between the ancient world and imperialism. Moore *et al* (2008) set out a manifesto for moving historiography out of the shadow of figures such as Grote, and a recent essay collection of Lianeri includes some important essays on the

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[54] This is not to the exclusion of other potential relevant periods.

[55] For instance, Hall & Vasunia (2008) contains an introductory chapter by Vasunia which has a broad scope and Hall's chapter on Neoclassical Architecture discusses a narrow aspect of the late-eighteenth century. The other essays discuss later material. Similarly the study of Rome has been well attested by, for example, Hingley (2000). It is important to remember that for specialists in both historiography and imperialism these topics are not novel, there has been a recent renewal in both areas – see Kent Wright (2002) for Enlightenment historiography and empire. When Vasunia (2003: 95) critiqued the belaboured attempts (or apparent lack of interest) from Hellenists in attending to the implications of Edward Said's *Orientalism,* he highlighted the disparity with advances made in studies of Rome. Although a full exploration of the relationship, as Vasunia espoused, has not happened, the decade since has seen important collections encompassing studies of the relationship between Classics and colonialism and questions of its legacy - for example Hardwick & Gilliespie (2007). There has been a recent focus on the direct relevance of Colonialism for classics now or on later imperial reception of classical works and languages - see Goff (2005a). Goff (2005b) notes the premise that: 'the discipline has played an active role both in imperialist and colonialist movements and in the opposing movements of resistance.' Key works on the ancient world and the shaping of empires have focused upon the nineteenth century and later, and this is particularly true for the use of Alexander: Vasunia (2007) and Hagerman (2009). See the collection by Bradley (2010) for focus on the nineteenth, albeit the essay by Vlassopoulos focuses upon the eighteenth century.

[56] Namely, the multi-volume histories of William Mitford and John Gillies, the impact of Gustav Droysen and the works of George Grote. See Demetriou (2001) on Alexander and Macedonian imperialism in historiography, and Demetriou (1996) on historiography and British government; for Grote generally, see Demetriou (1999) and Momigliano (1994) or Macgregor Morris (2008) for Grote in light of other eighteenth-century writers.

eighteenth-century.[57] Interest in Alexander has been limited, but Briant has been instrumental in excavating his strong ties with imperialism.[58] For example, his focus upon the French influences of the Scottish enlightenment has illuminated a depth of thought behind the treatment of Alexander's legacy and "civilisation" in debates on contemporary empire.

After Briant and Moore *et al*, this thesis contends that the eighteenth century should receive much closer attention. Briant's coverage is limited and leaves much about the "British" Alexander unexamined, particularly in literature and genres other than history. George C. Brauer and Min Wild have established a clear body of evidence of Alexander's place within the politics of Britain in the early-to-mid eighteenth century, but their work makes no attempt at a broader synthesis.[59] Coverage of Alexander is sparser at the beginning of the early-modern period. The medieval romance is well attested due to the seminal work of George Carey and more recently Richard Stoneman, but between the medieval period and eighteenth-century historiography there is little material specifically on Alexander, aside from mentions in related disciplines.[60] Although the first work cited is at circa 1600, the detailed examination of texts in their political context begins during the Restoration (chapter 1.2), when Alexander becomes apparent in political discourse.[61] The other seventeenth-century works considered in chapter 1 provide a sample of the pedagogical works on Alexander emerging from the Renaissance that were replaced by politically engaged readings.[62] In the absence of existing scholarship and given the relative paucity of known texts,

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[57] Lianeri (2011) and particularly Vlassopoulos (2011), Cesarani (2011) and Murray (2011).
[58] Moore *et al* (2008) passim and in particular Bayliss (2008). Briant (2005) on William Robertson, the Scottish Enlightenment and French historiography. See also other works by Briant (2006, 2007a, 2010c and especially 2009b).
[59] Brauer 1980; Wild 2004.
[60] Briant (2005: 1) notes that a meagre two works cover aspects of the eighteenth century Alexander in France, specifically focused on Voltaire and Montesquieu.
[61] Before this point, Alexander was treated mainly as role-model for teaching the aristocracy- this is admittedly an assertion made in the absence of existing detailed research on the sixteenth and seventeenth century.
[62] It should be noted that the division and overlap between pedagogy and politics is considered with more nuance in chapter 1.2.

starting this thesis any earlier than the late-seventeenth century would have resulted in a capacious, unmanageable project. At the upper end of the date range, the common citation of Napoleon as an emulator of Alexander covers many empty claims and poorly exploited areas for potential research.[63] The choice of Napoleon to conclude the thesis reflects the lack of a coherent attempt to understand the relationship between him and Alexander in the British imagination.[64]

The period from 1660 to 1800, as Moore and Macgregor Morris argue, is 'one in which the past, and ideas about the past, loomed large in everyday culture.'[65] However, this thesis is not interested in the commonplace use of antiquity, but in the acute deployment of Alexander for political ends or in the articulation of political ideologies. The former may include allegory, satire, or acts of *imitatio*, *aemulatio* and *comparatio*; the latter encompasses works on political theory, and includes rendering of ideologies of monarchy, imperialism and nation.[66] This thesis is not an attempt to give an exhaustive account of engagement with Alexander in the eighteenth century. It joins manifold evidentiary areas and historical contexts to provide a threadlike, yet multivalent, history of the relationship of Alexander in places and times when his paradigm was most used in British politics.

Three broad questions and their subsidiary concerns underpin the interrogation of the material. The first pertains to methodology: how did writers and artists write about Alexander? This includes their selection of ancient sources and the use of particular episodes as well as the extent to which they adopted, adapted, celebrated or censured these source or selections. The second consideration is why writers bothered to study Alexander at all. Cartledge and Worthington justify their works by making recourse to Alexander's spectacular achievements. Was this also the case for the works considered in this thesis? On what basis was Alexander

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[63] Given for example in Saunders (2006: 129-131).
[64] Semmel (2004) looks at Napoleon's image in Britain in the round.
[65] Moore and Macgregor Morris (2008: 3).
[66] *Imitatio*, *aemulatio* or *comparatio* defined after Green (1978) – see n.91.

considered, or not considered, "great", virtuous, famous or illustrious. Discovering the grounds for doing so serves to illustrate the esteem in which Alexander was held across the period, and why he was integral to the politics of the day. The answers to this question are fundamental to understanding how and why Alexander continued and continues to be relevant.

However, this study is not simply a search for a reductionist judgment on Alexander's reputation at a particular moment or during a given period. The third question, and the priority of the current work, is to understand the mechanics of Alexander's deployment in politics and political discourse: what was the model provided by Alexander and how was it defined? What were the values, nomenclatures or ideas that he helped to shape? More importantly, how were they challenged and how did they change? Two entwined aspects of his reception are of particular importance. Alexander was primarily noted for his martial achievement; how was he related to ideologies of conquest and imperialism? Since Alexander was also an exemplar for behaviour, good and bad; how was he used to define typologies of virtue? Using Alexander as a weathervane for identifying attitudes towards these ideas, the main task of this thesis is to interrogate the construction of British identity, individual and national, across the period in question. Tracing instances where Alexander could be used to express various perspectives in factional discourse is imperative to our understanding of his manifold image. Instances of divergence will be analysed in detail - for instance, the treatment of Warren Hastings (section 3.3), the depiction of various English kings during the Restoration (section 1.3), and the maelstrom of portrayals formed in response to Napoleon (chapter 4).

There are a vast number of significant themes that either cannot be given consistent prominence in the thesis or are omitted under these rubrics. Due to the ready identification of the Persian conquests with the actions and abilities of the Macedonian king, Alexander's character (i.e. his personal

virtues and failings) is implicit even to abstract discussions of his conquests or legacy. However, this thesis does not trace consistently particular aspects of that repute - his chivalry or ambition for example. Instead, it will consider individual characteristics as and when they offer insight to the primary questions and themes of the current investigation. Therefore masculinity is touched upon in the context of the attacks upon Stuart potency and degenerate court culture, but does not form a continuing theme in later *comparatio*.[67] Similarly, Alexander's divinity was of great controversy during the Restoration, but provoked less opprobrium in discussions of empire. Conversely, discussion of the effects of Alexander's aims and legacy was minimal in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, but was central to the calculation of his imperial value. A full discussion would necessitate a detailed assessment of historiography - particularly Alexander's place in stadial models of history - and therefore lies beyond the remit of the current work. Similarly, a discussion of Alexander's sexuality is sorely needed, but does not come under the rubrics of the current study.[68] Discussion of Alexander's cultural positioning – Greek, Macedonian or somewhere between – rarely comes into consideration other than in the historiography of this period and has been treated elsewhere, as has Britain's opinion of Alexander's enemies.[69] Finally, although often concerned with Britain's place in Europe and the world, this is a history of how metropolitan writers responded to classical texts, English language and the challenges presented by empire. It touches upon British views on India, but only as writers responded to events in debate upon the future of Britain's empire. It does not make any attempt to account for the emergence and influence of texts from other languages and cultures or trace their interaction with

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[67] See Baynham (2009: 295) on War and Masculinity.

68 It is worth noting that sexuality - particularly the question of Alexander's relationship with Bagoas or Hephaestion – does not appear in any of the sources investigated in completing this thesis – a phenomenon that requires a full explanation through further research. Ogden (2011) cites the beginning of the discussion of Alexander's sexuality with Tarn in 1948, but there is potential to go back much further.

[69] Bayliss (2004).

English-language genres. There is, therefore, no consideration on the impact of translations from Persia in the late-eighteenth century, which can be found in detail elsewhere.[70]

The four substantive chapters are arranged with a chronological bias, but significant overlap. In order that themes may be outlined clearly, the sub-chapters will often proceed in parallel rather than chronologically. The chapters are divided and arranged in order to nuance two broad arguments that have been made about Alexander's reception throughout the eighteenth century: they are paraphrased here as the "turn away from" and the "turn to" Alexander. According to Brauer, Alexander had 'a low reputation in England during the early and mid-eighteenth century.'[71] He attributed this to the Restoration clamour against arbitrary monarchy and the emergence of a concept of the destructive or criminal conqueror, an argument made most famously in the work of Henry Fielding.[72] Brauer's argument was further developed by Min Wild, who demonstrates that Fielding's critique had a legacy in the treatment of the Duke of Cumberland, who was criticised for his butchery of Jacobites in the '45 uprising.[73] Using new evidence, this thesis will explore the attacks made upon Alexander during and after Restoration England, in order to reconsider the extent to which a "turn away" from Alexander can be observed. The focus of the first chapter will be Alexander's repute in England from the 1660s until the 1690s. The consequence of England's century of political crisis was that his considerable fame collided with dissatisfaction at contemporary kingship. After William's death, Alexander disappeared from the rhetoric of monarchic debate providing a natural caesura in the rhetoric of British political discourse. Focussing on the period between the 1690s and the mid-eighteenth century, chapter two will

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[70] See App (2004), Hasan (2005), and Yohannon (1952) for Persian texts in English and England. These do not give a full account of knowledge of Alexander specifically, a topic that does require future research.
[71] Brauer 1980: 36.
[72] Brauer (1980: 38-9) notes that 'towards the end of the century and into the middle of the eighteenth, he had often been called a criminal conqueror and destroyer.'
[73] Wild: 2004.

discuss how Alexander was tested in discourse on the place of martial virtue within British society from the 1690s to the 1740s. Taken together, these chapters will demonstrate the shift in the nature and treatment of Alexander's repute: once a paradigm of virtue according to his martial achievement, he was rendered unacceptable due to his lack of social utility.

Recent studies in Classics have explored the ideologies and experiences of imperialism and their links to study of the ancient world. Belatedly influenced by postcolonial analysis, they have investigated the effect of Classics upon empire, and concluded that Classics was entwined with the imperial process.[74] The preponderance of works have examined the influence of the model of the Roman Empire, especially in debates upon Great Britain around the turn of the twentieth century and upon the significant role played by Classical education in British society in this period.[75] Brauer also notes the "turn towards" Alexander; this was as a result of the changing ideologies of empire, so that 'by the late eighteenth century, a more balanced estimate of Alexander is discernible'. In histories of Greece, he argues, there was 'recognition of his virtues' especially in histories that paid close attention to Arrian. John Gillies cited Alexander's 'heroic valour' and William Mitford copied Arrian's eulogy of Alexander to finish his own history.[76] This notion of Alexander being redeemed has been developed further by Briant's work

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[74] As Barbara Goff (2005b: 6) argues: 'The history of the discipline has been intimately connected with the process of empire at many levels, and it cannot come to historical self-consciousness without attention to these connections. See also Vasunia (2003: 88) who notes 'any account of Hellenism and of the reception of the Hellenic past in the modern period remains substantially incomplete without an understanding of European colonialism in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. See Goff (2005), on the complicity of Classics in Colonialism and Vasunia (2007) on Alexander and the British Empire.

[75] Vasunia 2003. The reciprocal effects of empire on the study of classics have been assessed in detail - Hingley (2000). Despite some notable exceptions (for instance Bernal's *Black Athena*) there have been few detailed monographs that attest to the relationship between Classics and Greece, and aside from a few acknowledgments of work to be done noted above, none on Alexander and imperialism. In his introduction to a collection of essays exploring the relationship between ancient history and empire, Kostas Vlassopoulos (2011: 20) noted that the 'majority of articles in this volume examine the complex relationship between the classics and imperialism in the context of the second British empire...' This reflects the *locus classicus* being territorial expansion and rule of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth century.

[76] Brauer 1980: 47.

on William Robertson. In the context of a discourse on British rule in India, Briant demonstrates that Alexander became celebrated as a conqueror due to his compassion for the peoples he conquered and his considerable imperial utility.[77]

This thesis will synthesize a more nuanced narrative of how Alexander was perceived to relate to the values implicit in British ideologies of imperialism. Chapter three will consider specifically how the notion of Alexander's conquest changed in the context of the changing realities and ideologies of British imperialism. It will combine scholarship responding to the challenges of ruling India in the late-eighteenth century with earlier material, in order to span Alexander's transformation from imperial pariah to more complex, yet viable, paradigm for Britain's empire. Treating imperialism as a self-contained theme in one chapter allows comparison of the radically changing ideologies of empire during a period of rapid imperial expansion. It should be noted that this is not a teleological study of how Alexander and imperialism became entwined. It is contended that paying attention to this important hinterland will enhance our study of this phenomena, but also that the eighteenth century offers an interesting area of study in its own right.[78]

This narrative has a natural terminus in the Napoleonic wars, given their profound effect on the nature of Britain's empire, and Britain's frenzied conceptual engagement with Napoleon. A novel type of enquiry that underpins all the chapters is how prominent "Alexanders" were shaped by their predecessor, and how their actions and reputations reshaped his image. Although Wild studies the role of one British "hero" (the Duke of Cumberland), others deserve attention, such as the Duke of Marlborough, Robert Walpole and Warren Hastings. These case studies will be distributed throughout each chapter and will culminate with Napoleon, perhaps the most significant modern Alexander of all. Whereas the first three chapters

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[77] Briant 2005.
[78] For example, Vasunia (2003).

construct longer narratives, the fourth chapter draws out the myriad complex repercussions of a "momentary" imaginary connection made between two figures of acute importance to contemporary British policy. A concluding chapter will outline some of the long term consequences of the connection between Napoleon, imperialism and Alexander. Given existing scholarship already analyses this period in detail, the intent of this section is to show the legacy of the eighteenth-century Alexander in the nineteenth, rather than embark upon a detailed study of the period.

The evidence used in this thesis will complement Briant's attempts to identify previously overlooked works that were crucial to forming the eighteenth-century Alexander. Just as Briant looks beyond histories of Greece to philosophy, this thesis will examine materials considered to be under the rubric of drama (plays, poems and essays) as well as "proto" or "pseudo" historical works, such as moralising tracts or editions of sources, in addition to non-historical genres, such as periodicals, novels and dialogues. Such emphasis will help to provide insight into the complex genesis of the modern historical Alexander as a discrete study, but it will also provide material for comparison with history in future studies. The material is overwhelmingly Anglo-British in origin, with the exception of some French pieces that were translated into English because they were of popular interest or of pressing national relevance, as in the case of the texts pertaining to Napoleon's invasion of Egypt.

The material was located using three methods. First, I used secondary scholarship to identify "known" historical or poetical works consonant with the themes of the current work. These were considered in detail if it was felt a new analysis could offer value or nuance the conclusion of existing analysis. For example, Henry Fielding's use of Alexander has been well-documented, but *Jonathan Wild* had not previously been placed in the context of the variety of genres analysed in chapter 2. Second, I have analysed more fully texts that received only partial treatment or passing mentions in secondary research or critical apparatus and given them a more detailed

treatment: for example, the translations of Quintus Curtius in the first chapter. The satires and periodical pieces in chapter 2 are all written by writers who were also heavily involved in current affairs and are about high-ranking figures in British society, but they have not previously been studied as a group.

Finally, through keyword searching of digital archives – and often through happenstance – I have located previously unknown works or at least works that haven't been considered by scholars directly interested in Alexander.[79] By the addition of a case study on the various texts that compare the Duke of Marlborough with Alexander, Chapter 2 constitutes an updated reading of texts that have already been considered by George C. Brauer and Min Wild. The study of Alexander and imperialism has focused upon historiography of Greece, but chapter 3 introduces Daniel Defoe's analysis of Alexander's conquests in addition to that of poet and politician George Lyttelton. The use of Alexander by those concerned with commerce – although noted in passing in scholarship of imperialism - has been overlooked in discussions of his imperial legacy and they are assimilated within a broader narrative of Alexander and imperialism. Chapter 3 also presents a unique case study on Warren Hastings and a previously unknown author in Thomas Beddoes. The discussion of Napoleon in chapter 4 features a majority of texts that have gone unnoticed in studies of Alexander or Napoleon, including an unpublished song from the British Library. The outcome of this research has *not* been a representative sample of works on Alexander consistently distributed across the period between 1660 and 1800. It is highly selective according to the particular thematic focus of the thesis and the evidence is clustered around known works (such as Nathaniel Lee's *Rival Queens*), periods where Alexander was particularly important (or at least visible) in politics (for example, the Restoration), previously undocumented topics (such as comparisons between Alexander and

[79] The following archives and catalogues were used primarily: *Early English Books Online*, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* and the British Library Catalogue.

Napoleon), or various combinations of the above. Out of all the material found, the sources selected provide evidence of a direct and explicit engagement with politics and political figures through recourse to Alexander or exemplify an attitude that was crucial in underpinning his relevance to politics.

0.4. THAT "COMMUNE ALISAUNDRE"

Alexander's death in Babylon in 323 B.C. marked the end of over a decade of campaigning that spanned the Danube in the north to Egypt in the south-west, traversed the heartlands of the Persian Empire, and reached a frontier at the Hyphasis River in India. Between his own reign and that of his father Philip, Macedon was transformed from a small kingdom in the north of Greece to the primary military and political power in the region. Alexander's "Afterlife" would transcend even these impressive feats. His reputation was established through abundant historical, philosophical, and literary works, it thrived across countries touched and untouched by his conquests. As a result, Alexander passed through manifold social and political milieus, was written about in numerous languages and genres, and rendered in a number of visual art forms.[80] In order to provide some context for a study of the eighteenth-century, it is necessary to offer some brief remarks on how his image had been handled and shaped previously.[81]

During the scramble for power that followed his death, Alexander's name was a potent invocation.[82] The wars of his successors saw his body, his attire, his family and even his tent used as political currency by his former generals, while his image would linger as a powerful reference point in dynastic iconography.[83] Many accounts were written by members of his entourage

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[80] For a readable overview, see Cartledge (2004: 229-42).
[81] This of course cannot be more than a tentative identification of some broad themes and trends.
[82] Meeus (2010) gives an overview of the preferences for Alexander by his successors.
[83] Alexander *imitatio* in coinage, for example, would continue throughout the Hellenistic period. For an old fashioned, but sage overview of the Hellenistic reception see Errington (1975) or more recently Bosworth (2002). For coinage see Dahmen (2007).

and contemporary observers during the Persian campaigns and in the period shortly afterwards.[84] The depth of the immediate literary record of Alexander's campaigns had far reaching repercussions, not just for the material fact, but also for the nature of later extant works. Although "lost" as entire narratives, these texts were written from a variety of political standpoints, as well as in different literary styles, and provided myriad views on Alexander's life and conquests. These encompassed, for example, an *apologia* by Aristobulus, the critique of Alexander's vices given in Clietarchus, and the mythologizing of the king's helmsman Onesicritus; in addition there was in circulation a range of spurious documents pertaining to his life.[85] In the extant historical record, the many "Alexanders" that were created in this period are apparent in the proliferation of character and even in the basic details of the campaigns.[86] The Hellenistic period laid the foundations for a lasting legacy, since it provoked extensive literary interest and promulgated Alexander's military glory and extraordinary life.[87]

The number and variety of sources opened up the possibility of widespread appropriation, often in polemical fashion.[88] Although not as claustrophobic as the relationship Hellenistic kings often had with their

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[84] See Heckel & Yardley (2004: xx-xxx) for an overview or Baynham (2003) for a more detailed discussion.

[85] Errington 1975: 154-5. In the main, the provenance of these documents remains obscure For example, the *Ephemerides Alexandri* were purported to be based on his 'royal' journals and concerned with his death being seen to be of natural causes, while his letters (cited in extent works) are almost certainly Hellenistic or later confections. The context of these is unlikely to be recovered with any certainty, but they are preserved in the extant work of Arr., Anab. 7.25 and Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 76.7. See Anson (1996) for the diaries or Heckel (1988) on the *Liber de morte Alexandri testamentoque eius* for Alexander's "will."

[86] By the time our first extant historical work was written, narrative history could build upon an already healthy set of sources. Diodorus Siculus' *Biblioteca Historica* preserved a broad narrative of his campaigns exerted from a selection of 'lost' histories, and the history of Pompeius Trogus was (epitomized by Justin) in the second half of the first century B.C. Diodorus is predated by Polybius who was not really concerned directly with Alexander. He is not particularly prominent in the receptions of Alexander addressed in this thesis, hence his brief treatment.

[87] See Stoneman (2003: 326) for the military emphasis of the reception of Alexander.

[88] Similarly, Wyke (2007: 6-7) notes for Caesar 'This extreme polarity in the fame of Julius Caesar – between superhuman provider for the Roman people and sordid master of slaves – has further ensured the enduring and diverse significance of the Roman statesman in Western culture.'

predecessor, it was actually in Rome that Alexander "the Great" was fashioned.[89] Rome would be the primary filter through which the eighteenth century engaged with Alexander, not only because it shaped the narrative of his life, but because it influenced the genres that would later document and comment upon his character.[90] The achievements of the Macedonian conqueror resounded emphatically in the Roman world provoking various instances of *imitatio*.[91] In the late republic, notable Alexanders included Pompey "*Magnus*", Julius Caesar, and Livy's rendering of Scipio Africanus; Trajan and Hadrian were *aemulatores* of the imperial age. Livy's famous counterfactual battle between Rome and Alexander had particular consequences for the eighteenth century: it established him as a benchmark for trans-historical competition, a challenge taken up with enthusiasm by writers who sought to place contemporary generals in historical context (see section 1.3 and 2.1). The premise and form of these comparisons were adapted in the eighteenth century; in Scipio and Caesar, Rome even selected some of the ancient figures that accompanied Alexander into the modern world (see section 2.2 for Caesar and Alexander)

Augustus' attacks on Mark Anthony, and his own tentative and selective *imitatio,* also evince a vexed dialectic between desire to cite Alexander as a model, and a fear of the accompanying moral connotations. In the Late-Republic, Alexander could evoke a prominent individual corrupted by eastern *mores* and a threat to Roman ideals of virtue.[92] Alexander may have been a role model as a conqueror (especially for conquests conducted in the

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[89] This claim was made in a seminal work on this topic - Spencer (2002: xiv-xv).

[90] A claim Spencer makes for the modern world more generally - see n. 15.

[91] As Richard Stoneman has noted, non-Roman subjects were rare in Latin and Alexander was rarer still for the extent and the detail of his Latin portrayals. Stoneman 1999a: 168. Throughout I use Green's (1978: 1-6) typology of *imitatio*: *imitatio* 'proper' (i.e. actual adoption of Alexander's modes and methods), *aemulatio* (those that strove to match him) and *comparatio* (or others comparing, for example, Caesar with Alexander). Green (1978: 8) also notes that up until the later years of the republic 'active distaste' would have been understandably applied to such comparisons with a monarch. For irreverence, see Plautus' slave in the *Mostellaria*: 'They say that Alexander the Great and Agathocles were a pair who did really big things.'

[92] For the Roman Alexander see Spencer (2002). See Stoneman (1999a: 170) and Spencer (2009) on Augustus and Quintus Curtius Rufus.

east), but he was also a monarch, a title that brought fears of tyranny.[93] The Stoic writers of the early empire, furthermore, expressed overt hostility and moral contempt for Alexander's conquests and *mores*.[94] Lucan saw madness in his slaughter and perceived Alexander's rapacity as a disaster for all men, even praising the moment of his death for its beneficence towards humanity: Alexander was a 'murderous tyrant, an "insane king", who filled the world with slaughter and was at last brought down by fate the avenger.'[95] Roman philosophy also defined the standards against which his character would continue to be judged. Seneca drew out the differences between *kosmocrator* and *kosmopolites* through a re-imagined meeting with Diogenes, during which the Cynic triumphantly rebuffs Alexander's attempts to give him worldly riches.[96] The lesson of contempt for material gains would have great resonance in the post-Classical Christian world, as did the notion of Alexander's insatiable ambition (for example, in the work of Henry Fielding).[97] These Stoic attacks defined the character traits and terms of moral discourse that were used to criticise Alexander from the middle of the seventeenth century to the mid-eighteenth (see section 2.3).

The Roman Alexander therefore provided a wealth of material pertaining to negative aspects of his character - Alexander's ambition, immorality or tyranny. More importantly, it made him a commonplace for debating these topics. In each moral vignette, Alexander acted as a foil for Rome or for particular constructions of virtue, rather than a figure to be explored in his

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[93] See Cicero *Att.* 299.

[94] Sen., *Ben.* 1.12, 2.16. Luc. 10.1-52. Spencer (2002) provides a detailed examination of the 'Roman Alexander.'

[95] Luc. 10.20-46 trans. Stoneman (2003a: 335). See Stoneman (1996) for an overview.

[96] Sen., *Ben*. 5.4: 'far more powerful, far richer was he than Alexander, who then was master of the whole world; for what Diogenes refused to receive was even more than Alexander was able to give.'

[97] Sen., *Suas.* 1.1: 'the elements of the debate are the greatness of the ambition as commensurate with Alexander's achievements so far, versus the idea that Alexander should be content with what he has already done.' The mortal transience of the greatest was restated in words spoken by Shakespeare's Hamlet, who envisioned that even a man of Alexander's stature would suffer his physical remnants to be reduced to the stuff used for stopping barrels: 'Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?' *Hamlet* 5.1.

own right.[98] In addition to adding negative moral connotations to his reputation for military excellence, this convention of studying one aspect of his reputation in genres exploring philosophy or morality would have an important effect on the reception of Alexander after antiquity.[99] Alexander life and character were compartmentalised and made portable enough to fit a variety of moral arguments.[100] In the Roman Stoics, Alexander had powerful advocates and critics who would be foremost in the transmission of classical thought into the early-modern world.[101] Not only were these works widely read in the eighteenth century, but Alexander's ubiquity in philosophy would encourage others – particularly Christian writers - to apply their own concepts of morality to an established subject.

Underlying the post-Renaissance interest in Alexander's achievements were the ancient texts themselves. It was also during the first two centuries of the Roman Empire that the three most extensive, extant narrative works on Alexander were written. Probably a contemporary of Claudius, Curtius Rufus' *Historiae Alexandri Magni Macedonis* is an account in ten books (of which eight survive) and the only extant narrative work on Alexander written in Latin.[102] Reflecting the Stoic attack on Alexander, Curtius praises his abilities (including compassion, bravery, hardiness in war and generosity), but is scathing about the degeneration of his character and the tyrannical excesses of his later life.[103] This was, he opines, due to the power of Fortuna, which corrupted Alexander's *natura* and led him to turn to

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[98] A point made by Stoneman (2003a: 327). The treatment of Alexander's meeting with Diogenes, for example, varied according to the author: unlike Seneca, Valerius Maximus and Aulus Gellius were more neutral in their stance on Alexander's encounter with the Cynic.
[99] See Bayham (2003: 15) for an overview.
[100] This is omitting the later Roman works which would not have been available to the early-modern reader, for example Julius Valerius (see Stoneman 1999a).
[101] While not guaranteeing Stoicism a primacy of opinion on Alexander, this would provoke his use in post-renaissance discussions of morality and the classical world. Although not a philosopher *per se*, Cicero was nevertheless one of the most widely read authors on morality and politics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
[102] The first two chapters are lost. For a discussion of the text and its transmission see Bayhnam 2001a.
[103] For his balanced conclusion, see Curt. 10.5.26-36.

foreign customs, sexual license and bloodthirsty tyranny.[104] This degeneration is particular apparent in the dramatic works of the Restoration (section 1.2).

Writing in Greek a generation or so later, Plutarch paired Alexander with Caesar in his famous arrangement of Greek and Roman *Vitae* – a coupling that heavily influenced *comparatio* with eighteenth-century figures (see sections 1.3, 2.2 and chapter 4 passim). Plutarch also discussed Alexander's Fortune and Virtue in two companion treatises. The *Vitae* provides ample record of his abilities and his ambition for glory and introduces an assessment of character which almost entirely omits the role of Fortune. Strongly apologetic in places, Alexander, it is argued, is not a habitual drunk (merely sociable), nor did he luxuriate in Persian customs (a matter of policy), while Alexander's crimes are often mitigated (Cleitus' murder, for example, is due to mischance).[105] Nevertheless, Plutarch saw some change in Alexander's behaviour in the final stages of his life and his actions throughout are judged subject to his own anger and intoxication.[106] The work also places particular emphasis on Alexander being receptive to instruction and philosophy, an implicit assumption of the didactic treatises of writers of the Italian Renaissance (section 1.1).

Plutarch's moral treatises examine Alexander favourably as a philosopher king, making particular note of his idealistic vision for his conquests and of his virtues, while disputing Livy's citation of Alexander's fortune as being the predominant factor in his success.[107] The far-sighted and beneficent Alexander was particular influential in the mid-to-late eighteenth century as writers considered Alexander's legacy in the context of Britain's imperial responsibilities (section 3.3). With a similarly encomiastic regard for Alexander's impact, the last substantial narrative work to be produced in the classical world was the *Anabasis* in seven books of Arrian, a scholar and high

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[104] For example at 3.12.18-20. See Stoneman (1999a) or Heckel (1984) for Curtius and Fortune.
[105] Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 45.1, 50.1.
[106] See Hamilton (2002: lvxiii- lxxii) for an overview of his characterisation.
[107] E.g. Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 8.

ranking official under Trajan, writing in the early-to-mid second century. Claiming to be Homer to Alexander's Achilles, Arrian's was the most positive and apologetic of the ancient accounts, and laid particular emphasis on Alexander's generalship.[108] Arrian formed the basis of much of the late-eighteenth century historiography that saw Alexander in a predominantly positive light (section 3.3. and 3.4). Collectively, the sources detail the day-to-day aspects of the campaign, in addition to the minutiae of his actions in battle and elsewhere, and present extensive discussions of his character.

The centuries following Alexander's death saw the dissemination of the Alexander "Romance", associated with the historian Callisthenes, but probably written by an unknown writer in Ptolemaic Alexandria during the third century B.C.[109] The Romance tradition developed in Greek, Latin, Armenian, Syriac and Arabic, and was set in manuscript form from the third century A.D.[110] Along with the work of Curtius, this bundle of texts would be the most widely influential portrayals of Alexander in the medieval period. Existing in various versions and interpretations, the Romance Alexander proliferated widely in Christian and Islamic countries from the tenth until the sixteenth century, far advancing the "historical" texts as resources for Alexander's story.[111] The Alexanders portrayed in the medieval English Romance are myriad, embodying the fantastical, the chivalric and the pious. The anecdotes contain lessons against hubris, ambition and

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[108] Arr. *Anab.* 1.11.6-8. Finally, there was Justin's epitome of Pompey Trogus. Compared in character to his father, Justin's Alexander was a visionary, but violent towards his friends and prone to intoxication. Just. *Epit*. 9.8.11-21. Like Curtius, he emphasized the change in the King's behaviour after the death of Darius, including his adoption of Persian practices and extravagance, but admired his good treatment of Darius' family. Just. *Epit.* 12.3.11; 12.4.1. 12.7.1-3.

[109] See Stoneman (2010) for a very brief overview.

[110] The complex transmission and construction are beyond the scope of the current chapter.

[111] For a brief overview of the Medieval Alexander see Mossé (2004: 178-88). Carey (1956) is the seminal work on the Medieval Romance. For a fuller list of the various (illustrated) versions inspired by various Alexander sources see Ross (1988), while various works by Richard Stoneman provide editions and analysis.

arrogance, whilst Alexander's adventures are filled with exoticism and encounters with the legendary.[112]

The medieval Alexander added the fantastical to the renderings of the conqueror from classical antiquity and expanded a repertoire that already included the celebratory, damning and marvellous. Aside from sheer entertainment, the Romance fitted Alexander into a number of quixotic moral conventions, the most obvious being the various dialogues that take place with sages from Aristotle to the Brahmins of India.[113] With parts still being republished in the late-seventeenth century, this dialogue reflected a constant appeal for works corrective of Alexander's insatiability for power and wealth, and one which easily elided into Christian opinions on placing happiness under God's law above personal aggrandizement. The Romance tradition of having Alexander talk to philosophers also established his prominence in moral instruction. Renaissance philosophy, politics and ethics relied heavily upon the evidence of historical figures and classical authors, so ancients who could readily provide examples in matters of character and morality were eagerly consumed.[114]

The Romance also ensured that Alexander became so famous that he became synonymous with fame itself:

> The storie of Alisaundre is so commune
> That every wight that hath discretion

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[112] See Stoneman (1994) for the legendary Alexander.

[113] Otherwise known as the Gymnosophists or the Brachmans. For example, in conversation with the Brahmin King Dindimus, his ambition and material obsessed life is critiqued against the ascetic, godly existence of the Indian philosophers. This is exemplified by the anecdote of Alexander's discovery of a beautiful gem. When tested upon a scale the gem - representing Alexander – weighs more than any amount of gold. When covered in a sprinkling of earth it proves to weigh less than a feather, a lesson that Alexander's ambition will not be satiated through material riches: 'this stone is you, your majesty, you - the master of all wisdom, the conqueror of kings, the possessor of kingdoms, the lord of the world; the stone is your counsellor, your castigator; its little substance shall keep you from the yearnings of shoddy ambition.' See 'The Journey to Paradise' in Stoneman (1996: 74 and xxviii) for references to "Romance" Alexanders. It covers topics such as moral and political advice and covers advisers, diet, dress – see Ryan and Schmitt (1982).

[114] A contention posited by Burke (2011) as existing up until the French revolution.

Hath herd somwhat or al of his fortune.[115]

Mocked by Chaucer because of his very ubiquity, the "fame" of Alexander was heavily implicated in the will to write about Alexander in the eighteenth century. It explained the author's choice to choose his life or address an aspect of his reputation in connection with a particular subject (passim, but see section 1.1 and section 2.1 particularly). But after wild stories told of his exploits during the Middle-Ages, the Renaissance humanists rediscovered the "historical" Alexander. Plutarch, Arrian and Curtius were all available consistently in ancient language editions from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[116] The first vernacular translations appeared Europe-wide in the same period, and Quintus Curtius (1553), and Plutarch (1579) were translated into English shortly afterwards. The miraculous aspects of Alexander so popular in the Middle-Ages became far less prominent, and Alexander came to be treated within a framework strongly influenced by Stoic and Christian morality.[117] The texts treated in this thesis very rarely refer to the contents of the Romance. Nevertheless, the Romance integrated Alexander within the pre-eminent belief system and guaranteed his transmission as a popular subject for morality, history and the nature of fame itself.[118]

By the early-modern period, provision of "good copy" and the assumption that he would be instructive, lay behind the momentum of Alexander's reception.[119] An overview of the ancient and medieval reaction highlights two central facets of his pre-modern reception: first, a malleability that enabled Alexander to be effective within different genres and maintain

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[115] Chaucer, *The Monk's Tale* 640-642.

[116] See Ross (1988: 67) for Curtius. The first edition of Arrian was by Trincalavius in 1535.. The latter was consistently popular and the former flourished in the Middle-Ages and in reprint particularly at the end of the seventeenth century (according to the ISTC and the ESTC). Arrian would appear in 1729. See Bolgar (1964) for his appendices of translated classical works.

[117] Melanchthon in 1538, for example, observed on the romance that *nemo sine risu legisset* ("no one would have read this without laughing"), see Centanni (2010: 30).

[118] See Clarke (1665) and Rollin (1739).

[119] As chapter 2 will show, it was not seriously challenged until the work of Henry Fielding in the 1740s.

relevance in a variety of social and intellectual contexts and philosophical streams. Second, thanks mainly to Rome, Alexander's name comfortably housed both good and bad - he was not simply a figure of damnation or emulation. This trait made his example useful to the edification of his readership and formed the premise of works produced for aristocratic instruction during the seventeenth century. The following chapter will begin by demonstrating why Alexander was a ready complement to an age and intellectual culture that avowed the primacy of the classical hero.

1. OF HEROIC VIRTUE, OF HEROIC VICE: ALEXANDER'S FAME IN EARLY-MODERN ENGLAND

In 1709, Joseph Addison wrote the following fantastical description of a Chamber of Fame for *The Tatler* weekly magazine:

> On a sudden the Trumpet, which had hitherto sounded only a March or a Point of War, now swell'd all its Notes into Triumph and Exaltation: The whole Fabrick shook, and the Doors flew open. The First who step'd forward, was a beautiful and blooming Hero, and as I heard by the Murmurs round me, *Alexander the Great*...[120]

After his grandiloquent introduction, the hero was guided by his historians to the first place at the highest table of a banquet, followed by other eminent generals, emperors and philosophers. The imaginative Chamber was the result of weeks of suggestions from readers of the magazine who were encouraged to nominate candidates for the most famous figures of the past.[121] It illustrates Alexander's position as the most well-known hero from the ancient world in turn of the century England, at least according to Addison.[122]

The works detailed in the introduction explain how and why Alexander could be claimed as the most famous figure from the constituency of the past.

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[120] Bond 1987: vol. 2, no. 81: pp. 13-21. *The Tatler* ran for almost 300 issues in 1709-10 and was written most regularly by Richard Steele (the founder), with contributions from Addison and others. News items and essays were ostensibly written by Isaac Bickerstaff – a pseudonym copied from Jonathan Swift – or his imagined relations. The induction is witnessed by Bickerstaff, who is conducted by his 'Daemon' *Pacolet*, past the sight of a multitude of persons climbing a vertiginous mountain to the Chamber. Upon arrival, the first and most famous are escorted to the main table. After Alexander, there followed Homer, Caesar, Socrates, Aristotle, Virgil, Cicero, Hannibal, Pompey, Cato, Augustus and, finally, Archimedes (who is only included after Pythagoras is deemed not to be 'flesh and blood'). Although the bulk of the fantasy of the Chamber of Fame is Addison's, Steele apparently appended the last two sentences - see Bond (1987: Vol. 1.x). The Chamber was proposed in issue no. 67, and debated passim, before it appears in no. 81.

[121] Addison's piece demonstrates the magazine's passion for figures from the ancient world, and particularly for Alexander, who appeared upon many occasions in its short lived existence. See King (1996) who gives more examples from *The Tatler*.

[122] King (1996: 36) notes the depth of knowledge that Handel and his librettist Rolli could assume for his audience in the opera *Alessandro* (1726). Plutarch was by far the most popular account of Alexander and the *Parallel Lives* the most widely read works on the Classical world in this period.

The aim of the current chapter is to investigate the acute relevance of that fame in pre and post-Restoration England. The first task of this chapter is to understand his intellectual resonance in works corrective to aristocratic morality, through an overview of his repute during the Renaissance, and an examination of three works that provide a sample of extended writing on Alexander in English in the seventeenth century (section 1.1). The second task of this chapter is to begin to explain what Alexander's fame implied and why it was acutely controversial in post-Restoration England.[123] George C. Brauer has noted previously that 'the English of the Restoration went further than most of the French in derogating Alexander.'[124] Admittedly not the focus of his piece, nevertheless his dating of the turn away from Alexander requires some revision. In addition to contextualizing the Restoration Alexander with the intellectual inheritance of the seventeenth century, this chapter will amplify and adapt Brauer's central thesis. Although his model of kingship was critiqued, Alexander did not become a completely antiquated model of aristocratic virtue until the decades *after* the Glorious Revolution, a trend that will be fully explored in the next chapter. The second and final sections of this chapter will outline a variegated version of Alexander's repute in Restoration England. Contemporary political critics used the allegory of Alexander as a negative paradigm for monarchy, but there were also strong, if occasionally uncomfortable, instances of positive *comparatio*. Far from arcane, Alexander was a figure embroiled in factional politics and debates on kingship.

1.1. ALEXANDER'S MIRROR TO PRINCES

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Alexander's reputation for conquest ensured he could be an example to aristocrats in works dedicated to

[123] This multifaceted explanation will be examined further in the subsequent chapter, which will set Addison's description within the context of its immediate political and intellectual background; the purpose of this chapter is to explain how Alexander could have been claimed as the most famous figure at all.
[124] Brauer 1980: 36.

prominent statesmen by their preceptors, if not always as a shining example.[125] Underpinned by a combination of Christian attitudes to morality and Stoic virtue, sins or vices, such as ambition, anger and pride, were the consequences of humanity's corruption, but they could be controlled through self-control and allow an individual to aspire to virtue and great deeds.[126] In *Les Essais* (1580), Montaigne (1533-92) used Alexander to illustrate the benefits of solid instruction; his valour and magnanimity inculcated by Aristotle and a love of Homer resulted in the conquest of Persia.[127] Erasmus (1466-1536), conversely, remembered him variously for having ambition to the point of madness (presumably after Seneca or Lucan), but also recommended his respect for the family of Darius to his readers.[128] In art, Paolo Veronese (1528-88) also depicted this famous act of chivalry which, as one of many commonplace set pieces from his life, featured prominently in art well into the seventeenth century.[129] Charles Le Brun (1619-90), for example, produced a series of paintings for the court of Louis XIV that depicted his victories and the chivalric treatment of his enemies.[130] This attitude towards the use of history *par exempla* is best summed up in Cicero's often borrowed phrase, *historia magistra vitae est*. The classical past was a

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[125] Green (1976: 481) notes: 'with the Renaissance comes a reversion to the Augustan picture. Great Captains – as the popularity of Plutarch's *Lives* demonstrates – were once more in the ascendant: the prevailing mood was summed up for all time by that marvellously evocative line of Marlowe's: "Is it not passing brave to be a king, and ride in triumph through Persepolis."'

[126] See Houston (1991: 147-8) for an overview.

[127] Montaigne *Essai* 2.26. This exemplifies the use of Alexander and other classical figures as a means of defining the virtuous individual when he wrote in praise of 'the eminent virtues that existed in him: justice, temperance, liberality, loyalty to his word, love for those near him, humanity to the conquered,' while apologising for his violent crimes - Mossé (2004: 184). The praise of his heroic character was echoed in other Renaissance writers - most notably Bacon - while Rabelais criticised him – see Brauer (1980: 38).

[128] *Institutio Principis Christiani* (1516), quoted in Erskine-Hall (1996: 40).

[129] Born in Verona and worked in Venice. The Family of Darius was painted for the Pisani, a family of Venetian patricians. The exact date of the composition is not known, but is usually dated to end of 1560s or beginning of 1570s – see Cocke 2001: 31.

[130] The motto displayed under the works - *sui victoria indicat regem* – made the theme of self-mastery explicit. For the artistic Alexander in context of his reception, see Spencer (1996). These works were widely copied in woodcuts and tapestries and widely available to the aristocracy by the late seventeenth century. See Mossé (2004: 189-96), Posner (1959) and Hartle (1957). For Le Brun, see Gareau (1992).

context through which contemporary society, and particularly character and morality, could be made, understood and negotiated.[131] Positive and negative models of historical characters, their action and modes of leadership could provide applied examples, which had the distinction of eliciting greater emotional responses, and were presumably more entertaining than stating dry precepts.[132]

Although not particularly concerned with the Macedonian, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) used Alexander as means of persuading his readership to turn to the pages of history for a sense of how to be an effective ruler. In *Il Principe* (1532), he stated that

> Every ruler should read history books, and in them he should study the actions of admirable men. He should see how they conducted themselves when at war, study why they won some battles and lost others, so he will know what to imitate and what to avoid. Above all he should set himself to imitate their actions and their ways of behaving. So, it is said, Alexander the Great took Achilles as his model; Caesar took Alexander, Scipio took Cyrus.[133]

Alexander was a prime choice for emulation since he was not only a great man, but exemplified the very point of the exercise: famously an imitator of Achilles, he was an admirable man, learning from great men.[134] Machiavelli's exhortation to use past figures placed the reader as the latest in a chain of men who drew upon the examples of great role-models. Although the style was soon to go out of fashion, even in the late seventeenth century Alexander was still considered worthy of such a treatment. *A School for Princes* (1680)

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[131] See Burke (2011) for an overview of this idea or Vlassopoulos (2011: 20) who notes 'for the educated elite of the eighteenth century, ancient history provided a cognitive model within which they could make sense of contemporary events and personalities and even predict the course of future developments.'

[132] Burke 2011: 52.

[133] Machiavelli 1995*:* 14. It must be noted that Machiavelli is cynical about the extent to which an individual can replicate his hero, but must attempt nevertheless if only to succeed despite falling short of their example.

[134] This is a point not clearly articulated elsewhere and the importance of Alexander as the premise for the mirror to princes needs further research.

discussed the various conspiracies that led up to his death in Babylon at the presumed hand of his enemies inside the court.[135] The purpose of the work was to show both the morality and the policy of Alexander in order to give sense to the political reader of the dangers of power and ways of circumventing them.[136] The choice of topic was due to the expediency of experience over 'meditation':

> All that we can imagine most exquisite in Policy, the subtilest Discourses upon the Art of Governing, the acutest Precepts, cannot make an Impression strong enough upon the Spirit; an example of what is past prevails upon it farther than the fear of what's to come; Experience persuades with greater ease than meditation; and we are more inclin'd to imitate great Actions that have been already executed, than to be the first Enterprisers of them...

The passage also reveals a second important reason why Alexander was a good choice. It was due not to his consistently successful action, but to the eminence of his reputation: 'Tis for this reason I have chosen for the Subject of my Work the History of a Prince, whom Fortune, Merit, and Reputation, have advanc'd above all others, and whose Actions ought to be of more Authority.'[137] Although ambivalent about Alexander's actions, it was taken for granted that his 'great Actions' would be treated with reverence.

Machiavelli used Alexander to frame a rhetorical commonplace. The rich source inheritance and varied interpretations of his character also allowed a detailed and variegated "Mirror to Princes" to be offered to interested patrons and other audiences. The works could include passages of narrative, but each episode invariably included explicit lessons in politics or a moral judgement: the history of a *vir illustris* was aimed at rounding the political

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[135] [A.O.] 1680.
[136] [A.O.] 1680: 6. The author continues: 'the different events that compose this history, the general desolation of several kingdoms, the malignity of Fortune, and the unexpected dismal accidents, will furnish Princes with most necessary precepts, both moral and politick...'
[137] [A.O] 1680: 3-4.

reader.[138] Although limited to a small selection of works and only focused upon making preliminary conclusions, the following section will consider how they functioned and why the paradigm of Alexander was particularly relevant.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Giovanni Botero (1544-1617), the Piedmontese political theorist addressed his dedicatee Philip Emanuel, Prince of Piedmont as most apposite to receive a work on Alexander:

> For where can Alexander be better lodged (being son of Philip) than in the hands of Philip Emanuel, for [he was born] unto Charles Emanuel, the most invincible Duke of Savoy? Or who ever had in so tender an age a greater sympathy, either in exercise of arms, in managing a Force, or in the apprehension of most noble and strange affaires, and in every other part, worthy either a gentleman, or an excellent Prince, with that famous king, than your highness hath.[139]

Making such a connection was, of course, part of the necessary flattery of writer to patron, but underlines the premise that Alexander's attributes and the nature of his affairs were directly relevant to those of the reader. Botero opened his *Observations Upon the Lives of Alexander, Caesar, Scipio* (1680) by praising Alexander's conquests:

> Never any man living, attained so high a pitch of renown and glory; or to so great, so ample, and so large an Empire, as well amongst the Barbarians, as the Grecians, as did *Alexander* the Macedon: who for this cause by the universal consent of all nations, obtained the first name *Great*.[140]

The measure of Alexander's glory was his sheer martial brilliance which placed him, in Botero's opinion - far beyond all other contenders.[141] Botero's

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[138] See Findlen (2002: 108-14) for the aims of such works.
[139] Botero 1602: dedication.
[140] Botero 1602: [1]. The treatise in the *British Library* does not contain page numbers so I have substituted my own.
[141] Since this chapter is concerned with the premises and broad characteristics of such works, there is no room for more detailed analysis but future studies of the development of historical method would find much material of interest in Botero's work.

nod to his acclaim, which he portrays as having come about due to the weight of previous recognition, demonstrates how Alexander's fame and achievement were an inheritance that came with considerable historical freight. Writers were confronted with the canon of figures from the ancient world from whom they could choose. Invariably, these were figures of war indicative of the importance of martial values to the aristocracy.

The work did not overlook the failings of Alexander as a man. Botero argues these resulted from his heightened successes: 'his great properties did corrupt, and in many things quite mar and overthrow the goodness of his nature.[142] Apart from the murder of Cleitus, a loyal soldier who challenged the king's dissent towards his own father (Philip II), the biggest criticism was saved for the development of an obsequious court culture, which puffed Alexander into claims of divinity:

> That I may not speak anything, how willing he was to be reputed the son of Jupiter, and to be adored after the Persian manner: by the former, to get the love and good will of the Barbarians: He was a prince much subject unto flattery, unto boasting and vaunting of own actions, which made him beyond all measure exceeding tedious and troublesome to as many should hear it.[143]

The court and practices of the Persians were clearly seen as affective upon the nature of the King, who changes, due to flattery, into a braggart. The corruption of Alexander demonstrates appositely the kind of lessons that these works took from his life. Alexander's fall from virtue offered the reader of noble birth direct instruction, since it provided a viable parallel with a fellow "prince", who demonstrated the destructive dangers of success: '...flattery hurts all men, but princes most of all others: because the greatness of their fortunes frames them of a more delicate ear, and less capable of truth; and makes them like little children, to delight in nothing but that which is

[142] Botero 1602: [54].
[143] Botero 1602: [76-7].

sweet and pleasing unto their humours.'[144] Alexander's infidelity and misdirected anger were also considered his non-venial sins; Botero censures fully the execution of the Indian warriors who had surrendered to him, and his murder of the blameless physician who failed to save his close friend Hephaestion.[145] Alexander was suitable for hammering home the importance of a sound character and the destructive results of vice on the individual.[146]

For a writer intent upon making overtures to important patrons Alexander provided a serious object of discussion, primarily thanks to the weight of his repute, which rested upon his martial achievements. Since his character showed failings, he also provided a rich vein of material for relevant lessons on morality. Although Machiavelli had famously argued for a prince to be capable of dissimulation - placing necessity above morality - a century earlier, Botero held his ancient princes to the standards of a virtuous life. This creed matched an individual against virtues such as justice and piety, and vices such as luxury and sexual license.[147] The contrast between his early career and later excesses drawn by Curtius placed Alexander on both sides of this moral template. This was a work intended for practical morality, adopting the same broad premise as Machiavelli's incitement to *imitatio*, but offered a corrective example as well as a paradigm.

When John Brende (c1490-1560/1), a former soldier, wrote the first English version of Curtius, he expanded upon why Alexander was the most apposite

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[144] Botero 1602: [79]. Botero warns his readers of the potential vulnerabilities of success, but excused Alexander these crimes on the basis of his fortune and his age. Botero (1602: [81]) also notes 'to as many as shall justly consider this prince, and look with a right eye upon him, it cannot but appear, that whatsoever was good in him, proceeded from his own nature; whatsoever bad, either from fortune, or his youth. But yet for all this, the breaking of his faith can never be excused [the massacre of Indians]'.

[145] Botero 1602: [82] notes: 'neither less blameable was his putting to death of that poor Physician, under whose hands *Ephestion* died; as though it had been in his power, when as nature was quite spent, and could not work any longer in him, to restore him again, and to give him life and health.'

[146] Holding Alexander and others up to the gaze of modern princes continued in the works of Rene Rapin - translated in 1673 - Queen Christina of Sweden and Frederick Augustus. The latter offered a forcefully argued apology for his life although admitting some venial sins on his behalf. Queen Christina of Sweden's discussion was translated in 1753 and that of Frederick Augustus in 1767. They are discussed in chapter 2.4.

[147] For an overview of treatises that use these 'categories' see Gilbert (1968: 1-16).

example for those avowing the past as a mirror to princes, in the preface to the work:

> Many have written, and experience besides declareth, how necessary historical knowledge is to all kind of men, but especially to Princes, and to other which excel in Dignity, or bear authority in any common weal; the same being counted the most excellent kind of knowledge, the chiefest part of civil prudence, and the mirror of man's life...[148]

In addition to 'faith and fear in God' (learned through scriptures), he continues magistrates must garner a policy in worldly things 'by [the] reading of histories'.[149] Brende felt "princes", such as the dedicatee and fellow soldier John, Duke of Northumberland, required histories as a means of giving knowledge of life beyond one's limited years of experience.[150] Expounding upon the premise of history engaging *par exempla* the precepts of philosophy, he also showed the direct benefit of a lesson in history, especially to young men who lacked the wisdom of living. History could provide a life's worth of experience, and a shortcut to erudition in matters of politics:

> But by this kind of learning in youth, a man is become aged, he hath knowledge without experience, he is wise before it is looked for, he is become a counselor the first hour, and a man of War the first day. The same thing has been verified in many, which in young age have been prudent counselors, and in small experience, politic captains. *Alexander* here is an evident example, who brought up under *Aristotle*, in Learning, and so given to this kind

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[148] Curtius Rufus 1614: Epistle. He continues, 'this is such a kind of knowledge as makes men apt, even with small experience, either to govern in public matters, or in their own private affaires. For by comparing things past, with things present, men may easily gather what is to be followed, and what is to be eschewed. And he which can read them with such judgment, weighing the times, with the causes, and occasions of things, shall both see most deeply in all matters, best declare his Opinion, and win most estimation of prudence and wisdom.'

[149] Curtius Rufus 1614: Epistle. He continues, 'As in all Art there be certain principles and rules for men to follow, so in Histories there be examples painted out of all kind of virtues, wherein both the dignity of virtue and sowlness of vice, appeareth much more lively, then in any moral teaching: there being expressed by way of example, all that Philosophy doth teach by way of precepts.'

[150] For his life and the relationship between Brende and the Duke, see Davis (1938).

> of study, that he had *Homer* always laid under his beds head (whereby he might be admonished of the virtues and office of an excellent Prince,) entered into his Kingdome, when he was but twenty years of age: and nevertheless, both established his own Estate with such prudence, that within short space (besides the enlarging of his own bounds) he subdued the greatest part of the world. And albeit he began so young, and continued so small time, yet no mans acts be comparable to his: being counted the most Excellent Captain, from the beginning.[151]

Brende evoked Machiavelli in producing Alexander as the exemplar of the mirror to princes. Citing the latter's knowledge of Homer as the reason for his precocious achievement, he was the archetype for the possibilities of learning through reading history. Alexander was doubly the premise of such studies. Worthy of emulation, due to his conquests, his achievements verified the methods by which a prince should learn: by reading a work proffered by his teacher.

One curious aspect of Brende's work is the apparent dissonance between the moral template being espoused and the paradigm of Alexander. The particular qualities that Brende wished the reader to draw out - to flatter the Duke - were as follows:

> I was also moved the rather, by considering the qualities of your Grace, which seem to have certain affinity and Resemblance, with such as were the very virtues in *ALEXANDER* .... he was of seemly stature, bold in his enterprises, stout of stomach, moderate in pleasures, wise in council, and provident to foresee things: that he was most excellent in conducting of an army, most politic in ordering his battles, that he could encourage his soldiers with apt words, and when need required, take part of their peril.[152]

Martial virtues predominate – bravery and generalship - as do moderation and wisdom. But there is no mention of the negative aspects of Alexander's portrayal by Curtius (for instance, his later immoderation), as direct censure or warning of potential faults would, no doubt, not please the patron.

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[151] Curtius Rufus 1614: Epistle.
[152] Curtius Rufus 1614: Epistle.

The dissonance between work and preface cannot entirely be explained by sensible (and presumably lucrative) editing of the parallel to flatter the reader. The contrast is even more explicit when considering Brende's declaration that history was not only to be the domain of aspiration, but of instruction, though the study of the failings of men and polities. Brende wished his readers to focus particularly upon understanding 'the grounds & beginnings of commonwealths; the causes of their increase, of their prosperous maintenance, and good preservation: and again, by what means they decreased, decayed and came to ruin.'[153] His typology of both states of existence (prosperity and decay) is given as follows:

> how they [commonwealths] prospered so long as they maintained Justice, persecuted vice, used clemency and mercy, were liberal, religious, virtuous, and devoid of covetousness. And contrariwise, how they fell into manifold calamities, miseries, and troubles, when they embraced vice & forsook virtue.[154]

Yet Brende's preface does not cite Alexander as evidence of vice, simply as an example of a prince acting with martial virtue. It was only the actions of those beneath the magistrates or 'disobeyers of high powers' that Brende cites explicitly as contributing to the decline of the commonwealth:

> in history, it is apparent, how dangerous it is to begin alterations in a commonwealth. How ennui and hatred, oft rising upon small causes, have been the destruction of great Kingdoms. And the disobeyers of high powers, and such as rebelled against magistrates, never escaped punishment or came to good end.[155]

The focus of Curtius' second pentad is the decline of Alexander as *rex*.[156] His tyranny, raging ambition and vice stand starkly against the praise of liberality, virtue and lack of covetousness ascribed to Brende's healthy commonwealth. Two possible reasons for this failure to connect these can be

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[153] Curtius Rufus 1614: Epistle.
[154] Curtius Rufus 1614: Epistle
[155] Curtius Rufus 1614: Epistle.
[156] Bayhnam 1998: chapt. 6.

suggested. Brende was presenting the narrative arc of Curtius as an implicit exemplification of the virtues of the individual within the community, a case-study in how virtues could create an empire and how vices could ruin the man and his court. His character change – clearly pointed to by Botero - stood without any need to remind his patron of the obvious dangers that awaited a prince; it would be impolite to suggest any parallels with *those* aspects of Alexander's life. Perhaps Brende's failure to explicate the degeneration of the king's character is indicative of the deployment of the "mixed" nature of his repute. It allowed those that wished to argue for his excellence as a role model to do so without giving credence to other attributes. In either case, Brende had no problem in placing Alexander, as the mirror to his prince, at the heart of his commonwealth. As we will see in the following section, this premise would not stand scrutiny in more politically turbulent times and places.

Explaining why he made a translation, Brende argues that England had been behind other nations in bringing histories into the vernacular, thus missing 'worthy' examples of acts of 'greatness' and examples of virtue from the ancient world. In introducing Curtius and his subject, it was the predestined nature of Alexander's actions that recommends him first and foremost to the reader:

> the Acts of the great *Alexander*, being figured in the Prophets *Jeremy* and *Daniel*, and mentioned in the first Book of the *Macabees*, seem to have been borne, and brought forth into the world, not without a most special providence and Predestination of God: who prospered to his proceedings, that (as *Iustine* writeth) he never encountered with any enemies, whom he overcame not; nor assailed Nation, that he subdued not.[157]

His martial achievement is foremost, as it was for Botero, but clearly couched within a divinely determined schema and this provided a further proof of the suitability of the topic for the reader.

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[157] Based loosely on Just. *Epit.* 12.16.1.

Brende's citation of divine providence – or the citation of God's will as a determining factor behind historical change - was an important moral and historical framework within which the achievements of Alexander could be contextualised in this period. This was based on a progression of world empires from various versions of a "prophesy" from the book of Daniel, where Alexander was perceived to be represented by the four headed Leopard (the third great empire, that of Greece or Macedon), that began with Assyria, then Persia and ended with Rome. The schema was adopted widely in other historical works.[158] The *Key of History* (first translated in 1566 but republished up until 1661), was a treatise by the Protestant historian Johannes Sleidanus (1506-66), and concerned the passing of these empires, represented as the transition of the 'imperial seat' across continents and between eras.[159] At the point of the defeat of Darius he notes, '*Alexander* by these famous victories, brought under his subjection almost all the countries lying eastward, translated the Imperial seat out of *Asia* into *Europe*, and founded the third monarchy.'[160] Alexander's role was as the destroyer of the previous empire and the progenitor of a Greek hegemony which was to last until Caesar. Couched in such overtly Christian terms, his personality flaws become symptomatic of the important yet brief role prescribed for him:

> After this he made wars in *India*, but such is the weakness of mortal men; those blasts of full-handed and indulgent Fortune, could not breath upon him, but must needs puffed him up with ambition: when having played many insolent pranks, and in a manner commanded Divine worship to be given him: coming to

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[158] The schema derives from Dan. 7:7. It was first developed by the 5th century Christian theologian Orosius - see Kelley (1980: 586). The others stages were Ninus and the Assyrian Empire, Cyrus and the Persians and, after the Grecian Empire, Caesar and the Roman Empire).

[159] Sleidanus (1661: 361) notes: 'the Leopard is *Alexander* the Great, or the Greek Empire; his four wings and heads are the four Kingdoms which rise out of the Monarchy after *Alexander's* death.' See Kess (2008) for his life and works.

[160] Sleidanus 1661: 37.

> *Babylon,* there died of a Fever; or (as many write) of poison, being 33 years of age, and having reigned 12 years...[161]

His aspirations to divinity were the result of 'Fortune' whose purpose has already been served by the time of his death. In citing Fortune, Sleidanus was able to elide the idea of world empires and divine providence with the motif of *Fortuna* constantly used by Curtius to reconcile Alexander's actions with providence within and outside his own lifetime.[162] Alexander was a successful prince, but also a powerful lesson of man's mortal failings and the divine will.

In 1665, Samuel Clarke (1599–1682), clergyman and prolific biographer, published a narrative – entitled *The Life and Death of Alexander the Great* - that explained more precisely how divine providence was behind key moments of the campaigns.[163] At first, the hand of the divine acted though Alexander's agency together punishing the Persians for their degeneracy. This process is foretold, not just by omens of the demise of the Persian Empire – for example, the destruction of the Temple of Diana – but also by the citation of the divinely inspired dream:

> He was wholly taken up with thoughts of subduing *Asia,* there appeared to him in his Sleep the resemblance of the High Priest of *Jerusalem,* who bade him be courageous and bold, and speedily with his Army to put over into *Asia,* promising that he would be

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[161] Sleidanus 1661: 37-8.

[162] This historical framework for Alexander and indeed the rest of the ancient world would survive into the next century, especially in the work of Charles Rollin (1739) who used this idea to frame his popular history that focused upon Greece. Unfortunately the relationship between this model of historical change and those of the historiography of the enlightenment is beyond the scope of the current work. The invention of Alexander's legacy started in this period from a deterministic, Christian moral framework. Although the particular schema had little effect upon the most prominent appropriations of Alexander in the late-seventeenth century, the genesis of eighteenth Greek historiography needs to be considered with it. See Clarke (1945) for the popularity of Rollin.

[163] See Hughes (2004). His treatise was entitled *The Life and Death of Alexander the Great, The first Founder of the Grecian Empire. Represented by the Brazen Belly of that Image; Dan.2.32. and by a Leopard with four wings, Dan.7.6 and by a He-Goat, with a great horn between his eyes, Dan.8.5 & co.* King (1996) overlooks the work of Clarke (1665) hence its use in detail here. Samuel Clarke published other works on great men including Charlemagne (which was published alongside the Alexander), William the Conqueror and Christ.

> his Conductor in the Conquest of the *Persian* Empire, as *Alexander* himself reported.[164]

Just as the divine provoked Alexander's enterprise, so God's imperative was the demise of the Persians, who were undone early in the campaign and who, as the invasion progressed, were doomed to undermine their own deference. Memnon, for example, is ignored when he famously advised the regional Persian commanders to pursue a policy of scorched earth:

> But where God hath a purpose to destroy, wise men are taken away, and the charge of things is committed unto such as either cannot see what is for their good, or that know not how to put in execution any sound advice; the course which Memnon had propounded, must in all likelihood have brought the Macedonians into great straits, and stopped them...

Like the Persians, Alexander is also doomed from the point at which his ambition led him beyond his princely morality to reject the offer of the partition of empire sent by Darius:

> yet *Alexander,* rejected all; though it was very probable, that if he had followed his advice, and set bounds to his ambition within those limits, he might have been as famous for his virtue, as he was for his great successes, and might have left a successor of fit age to have enjoyed his estate, which afterwards, indeed he much enlarged, rather to the greatning of others than himself, who to assure themselves of what they had Usurped, left not one of his issue alive within a few years after. Besides, *Alexander* by going so far into the East, left behind him the reputation which he brought with him out of *Macedonia,* of a just and prudent Prince: A Prince temperate, advised, and grateful; and learned by abundance of prosperity, to be a lover of wine, of Flatterers, and of extreme cruelty.[165]

Clearly drawing upon Curtius, this was the tipping point in Alexander's life, beyond which his personality is the subject of opprobrium. Finally, it was his hubris and imitation of those he conquered that corrupted him to the corrupt

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[164] Clarke 1665: 7. See Plut., *Vit. Alex.* 3. Joseph., *AJ.* 11.314-347.
[165] Clarke 1665: 23-4.

'blasphemies of the Persian court.'[166] By setting Alexander in a fatalistic context and by moralising about his character, Clarke provided a salutary tale of weakness for Princes, teaching respect for virtue and also for the divine. Alexander's story of glory and hubris, followed by a significant fall, fitted him snugly within a Christian moral template.

From the Renaissance, Alexander's fame was underpinned by his achievements as a conqueror due to the primacy of history's judgment and the continued interest of many aristocratic readers. Botero, Brende and Clarke, however, felt free to praise or blame Alexander for various virtues and vices, within a Christian moral template that echoed the Stoicism of the Roman Alexander, and accommodated the moral disintegration apparent in the work of Curtius. His repute is well summarized in an anonymous tract from 1680 that considered the various plots made against his life. It concluded on matters of character that 'the eminent Qualities appearing in him at the beginning of his Reign, made every one admire him; the enormity of his Vices, proceeding from his Fortune, render'd him odious to all the World.'[167] Rather than losing traction as a result of obvious moral odium, it was because of it that he gained relevance and popularity.[168] Alexander

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[166] Clarke 1665: 23-4: 'For he persuaded himself that he now represented the greatness of the Gods; and he was pleased when those that came before him, would fall on the ground and adore him. He wore the Garments, and Robes of the *Persians,* and commanded his Nobles to do the like. He entertained into his Court, and Camp, the same shameless Rabble of *Curtizans,* and *Catamites,[...]* as *Darius* had done, whom he imitated in all the proud, voluptuous, and detested manners of the *Persians,* whom he had vanquished, and became a more foul and fearful monster.' The idea that fortune or providence affected a man's life was broadly accepted in the Renaissance and did not exclude the abilities of men to be prudent or their need to be virtuous, which allowed scope for censure of character. As Orr (2001: 119) notes the "imbrication" of Alexander's story within the Christian realm "served to remind audiences of the final, Providential frame within which all human history was unfolding, providing reassurance that order would prevail in both the short and the longer term." Clarke allows for the choices made by Alexander's own mind and the paradox between the inexorable will of the divine in the first instance and the human will of Alexander in his later campaigns is not fully explained.

[167] [A.O] 1680: 142-3: The 'liberal' Alexander of a 'sweet and gentle disposition,' later became 'unjust, cruel, extravagant, mistrustful, superstitious, and so addicted to all sorts of Vice, that there was no hopes of returning.'

[168] Such a "double take", monumentalising of his achievement with critique of the detail was facilitated in part by the sources. Plutarch's anecdotal and un-chronological arrangement,

could be reduced easily to simple binary expression; his "double-sided" character - expressed in terms of "virtues" and "vices" - made a complex individual useful and easy to comprehend.

1.2. THE RIVAL QUEENS

In England, as the example of Alexander shows, history had long been fundamental to politics because it edified its protagonists.[169] The extreme constitutional and social changes of the seventeenth century - civil war, regicide, Interregnum and the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 - enhanced the role of history as a direct tool for intervention. Figures from the English, European and ancient past were discussed through an increasing variety of formats and from a multiplicity of religious, constitutional and moral standpoints. Historical writing had mainly assented to the virtue of monarchy or of ancient heroes; it was an age 'confident that virtue and responsibility were inherited by gentlemen and monarchs'.[170] The Restoration heralded critiques that not only exposed the flaws of previously admired characters, but exorcised contemporary political concerns.[171] The French émigré philosopher Charles de Saint-Évremond (1613-1703), while generally in awe of the character and achievements of both Alexander and Caesar, make a rare direct comment on the state of the dysfunctional relationship between the ordinary and the great:

> Here I cannot forbear to make reflection upon those *heroes* whose Empire and Rule has so much sweetness in it, that it is no difficulty to obey; we cannot have for them those secret repugnancies, nor those inward promptings to liberty which perplex us under a forced obedience; all that is within us is made supple and easy; yet what comes from them is sometimes insupportable. When they are our Masters by right of power, and

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allowed for themes of character to be easily identified and compartmentalisation according to contemporary standards of morality.

[169] Woolfe 1997.

[170] Spurr 1998: 3.

[171] John Milton and James Harrinton being the seminal writers to do this. See Woolf 1997: 208-10.

> so far above us by Merit, they think to have, as it were, a double Empire, which exacts a double subjection. However, since there is no reigning in deserts and solitudes, and that there is a necessity of their conversing with us it should methinks be their interest, to accommodate themselves to our weakness; and we should reverence them like gods, if they would be content to live with us like men.[172]

Carnochan has abstracted this plea to the aphorism 'real heroes are not easy to live with', a comment that aptly presages the treatment of Alexander in the literature of the age of the enlightenment. More specifically for England during the Restoration, Saint-Évremond evokes the potential conflict stemming from the rule of a man of exceptional status. His demand for "heroes" to comport themselves in a *mortal* manner more palatable to their subjects, was a timely critique of divinity and kingship in England. In the 1670s and 80s, the populace was uneasy about the comportment of a restored Stuart dynasty and finding it difficult to obey, let alone revere them like gods.

Apart from Samuel Clarke's history, the most detailed exploration – and critique – of Alexander during the Restoration came from tragedy. In the late 1670s, the plays of Nathaniel Lee (c1650–92), and his more light-hearted imitator John Banks, used the established historical sources, with adapted scenes and characters. *The Rival Queens or the Death of Alexander the Great* (1677) is set, following Jean Racine's *Alexandre* (1666), at what would turn out to be the end of the king's life, namely his return to Babylon accompanied by his new queen Roxanne.[173] Alexander's first (and still current) wife Statira, upon being told of his new love, feuds with both Alexander and Roxanne before being murdered by her competitor. In the finale, the king is poisoned

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[172] Saint-Évremond 1672: 28-9. See Maber (2004). The work was entitled *Judgment on Alexander and Caesar; And also on Seneca, Plutarch and Petronius* (1672).

[173] The play is set within a context familiar with the version of the story by the French dramatist Le Culprenade which explored the tension between the desires of the king and the necessities of his position. His play *Cassandre* had been translated on the instructions of Charles II – see Brauer (1980: 35). Further work on the genesis of the early-modern dramatic Alexander is needed.

by a conspiracy of his subordinates. In addition to Racine's version, Alexander's complex love-life was also embedded within English dramatic tradition.[174] A slightly different version had been explored by John Lyly (1554–1606) in his late-sixteenth century production of *A moste excellent comedie of Alexander* (1584).[175] Set after the destruction of Thebes, Alexander tarries to pursue the love of Campaspe before the issue is resolved when Alexander discovers she has fallen for his artist Apelles, blesses their love and rides off to conquer Persia. Like Lyle's version, Lee's Alexander spends his time in the pursuit of pleasure rather than fighting for glory, much to the chagrin of his generals who are unnerved by the king's switch from martial glory to being ruled by two women. Lysimachus, for example, asks 'but now two wives he takes, two rival queens disturb the court; and while each hand does beauty hold, where is there room for glory?'[176] Vernon argues that Lee may have wished only to reflect the general critique of the king in Curtius or Plutarch, but given his overt criticism of monarchic rule in *Nero* (1675) and consistent return to the subject in his later work, a more direct reading of the play within its political, and immediate historical context is warranted. While Dryden and other poets had celebrated Charles' restoration initially with works such as *Astraea Redux* (1660), during the 1670s concerns led to a trend for opposition to be conducted from the stage through 'coded' works on history.[177] Failure to discharge one's duty due to his pursuit of pleasure was a constant criticism levelled at Charles, especially during the Dutch Wars, and the sexual incontinences of his court became a popular theme in politics

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[174] Hartle (1970) somewhat attributes the invention of love and Alexander to the French court culture of the 17th century when clearly it had been explored at length long before that. This also seems to have been overlooked by Brauer (1980).

[175] It is worth noting that there was also a strong English language tradition of exploring the love matches of Alexander's court before the restoration. John Lyly produced his play for the Queen's family, while John Weston's *The Amours of Thalestris* was produced one year after Racine's play. Owen (2002: 86) also points out the same theme in the contemporary *Titus and Berenice* (Otway 1677) and Dryden's *All for Love* (1677).

[176] Lee 1677: 1.1.65-67.

[177] See Braverman (1993: 115, 136) who notes the attention of Dryden, Sedley, Crowne and Lee to the 'anachronism' of restoration. See also Munns (1998: 94). Lysimachus is the only example of heroic mode - see Vernon (1970 xix-xx) for this point.

and literature.[178] Charles' sexual excesses were a matter of common record: fifteen acknowledged bastard children from a reputed 75 and many notable mistresses like the actress Nell Gwynne. Military defeat in the 1670 also saw his critics make full use of the metaphor of sexual impotence and corruption.[179] Who better to illustrate such concerns than a king noted for his martial vigour brought to turmoil by a fight between his mistress and a Persian queen?[180]

Where Lyle's play climaxed with an amicable resolution for the lovers and king, Lee's version was far from just an 'amatory' tale and ended explosively. The court was actively outraged by Alexander's treatment of his loyal Macedonian followers. The interplay between king and court hinges upon the numerous slights to their honour: these include the summary execution of their contemporaries (Parmenion and Philotas), the imprisonment and exposure of Lysimachus to a lion, and the adoption of Persian practice. The result is a plot to kill the 'tyrant'.[181] This intrigue is brought to fruition at the climax of the play, but not until after Alexander has committed his most outrageous crimes: the murder of Cleitus, who is characterised as a loyal and steadfast commander.[182] The transposition of the murder to the end of Alexander's life in Babylon meant the key episodes in the courtly drama occurred in close succession. Lee presented Alexander as a tyrant, using the well-known trope of his loss of self-control, and set the play within a claustrophobic court turning against the fearful rule of the king; even

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[178] Lee 1677: 1.1.65-67. See also Spur (2000: 195-213). It was also a reoccurring theme in the diaries of Pepys - see Latham and Matthews (1971: 3.127; 4.30; 4. 136; 5.21; 7.197, 349). The tripartite relationship between Alexander's long standing Persian wife Statira and his latest wife Roxanna (the eponymous queens) will prove highly destructive, since the intrigues of the queens culminate *on stage* with Roxanna fatally prosecuting her jealousy by murdering Statira - Lee (1677: 5.1.118-163). However, the *unseen* effect of Alexander's wanton passions will be the unclear and bloody succession, since Roxanna reveals her intent to promote her unborn child to hegemony - Lee (1677: 3.129-134).

[179] Corns 2007: 323-5. The accusation of indolence struck fears that the aristocracy should maintain martial vigour, else society descend into effeminacy and corruption.

[180] Vernon (1970: xx) notes the choice might even have been inspired by a recent meeting between Charles' mistress (Lady Castlemaine) and Queen Catherine.

[181] Lee 1677: 1.2.10-11.

[182] Clytus, a loyal commander held in high regard (2.127-150), is executed (4.2.184-211).

Alexander's most faithful friend Hephaestion is terrified when he sees 'the lightning in his eyes'.[183] Crown versus parliament had dominated the politics of England throughout the seventeenth century, and this dysfunctional interaction was echoed in the play's overarching theme: the conflict between an unbending, powerful king - acting with arbitrary judgment and at his own whim - and the murderous resolution enacted by his subjects.[184] The concern with arbitrary government had resurfaced in the early 1670s. Charles had bypassed parliament to pursue the Second Dutch War and softened the crown's stance on Protestant dissenters. With bribery prominent and Charles' placemen at court, there was widespread fear that the King was pursuing an "absolutist" policy to free himself from parliament.[185]

Concern with Charles' actions was heightened by his perceived modes, and Lee's work emphasized obsequious or corrupting court behaviour, drawing upon the trope prominent in Curtius and emphasised by Brende and Botero. Riled by the oriental indulgences of the court, Cleitus draws out the worst excesses of the king, whilst drunkenly criticising Alexander's 'blasphemies'.[186] Cleitus objects to the 'oriental' indulgences of the King, a charge that carried overtones of the French culture at Charles' court. Alexander's claim that his guests at a banquet 'as gay as a Persian god will stand' was analogous with common accusations against a Restoration court led by a '"merrie"' monarch noted for '"avowed luxurie & prophaness"', and Charles was perceived by some to have ensured that '"*a la mode de France* had succeeded the old English style"'.[187] The reason behind forcing Cleitus and others to dress in eastern robes - 'to sooth the King, who loves the Persian

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[183] Lee 1677: 2.2.10-11.

[184] See Miller (1973: 252-63) and Cruickshanks (2000: 41-5). The notion of arbitrary as shorthand for 'popish' was long established and used by Andrew Marvell in the following year, indicating (albeit) not conclusively that Lee's portrayal of the actions of Alexander was an allusion to popish pretentions - see Marvell 1677. For the connection between popery and arbitrary government see Walker (2003:92) and Spurr (1998) for Marvell.

[185] See Spurr (1998: 8) or Brown (1998).

[186] Lee 1677: 4.2.188.

[187] Lee 1677: 3.2.435. As remarked in a letter from John Evelyn to Samuel Pepys, quoted by Keeble (2002:176-82). Orr (2001: 120) notes that the play 'offered rebuke' to a court notorious for its license and 'Persian vest.'

mode' – is reminiscent of an infamous incident when Charles ordered the replacement of English musicians with French ones, more to the taste of the king.[188] This idea was potent and contemporary, as Owen shows, due to the concerns with French influence at court and the particular matter of the influence of Charles' French mistresses.[189] Sedley's *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1677) - which opened to coincide with the reconvening of parliament after Charles' prorogation – showed the influence of pernicious advisors and the corrupting influence of an eastern bride.[190] The cabal of plotters cites hatred of *proskynesis* as an aggravating factor in treason, and makes the connection between Persian practice and tyranny. After being struck by the king for mocking the Persians 'that adored him', Cassander declares 'when I abandon what I have resolved, may I again be beaten like a slave'.[191] A "Persian" style monarchy would mean subjugation for the court and this made the case for regicide.

Overt Francophilia was accompanied by the propagation of pro-Charles and pro-monarchic patriarchalism in the 1670s, through which the King sought to reiterate the arguments for the divine right of Kings.[192] Concerns with Charles' divine right were reflected in the consistent refrain of Alexander's own divinity and its rejection by his subjects. As Cassander complains:

> All nations bow their heads with homage down
> And kiss the feet of this exalted man;
> The name, the shout, the blast from every mouth
> Is Alexander....
> It drowns the voice of heaven. Like dogs ye fawn,
> The earth's commanders fawn, and follow him;
> Mankind starts up to hear his blasphemy,
> And if this hunter of the barbarous world

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[188] Lee 1677: I.i.250. Described in Keeble (2002: 179).
[189] Owen 2002: 86.
[190] The result was Octavian's victory, a figure noted for his tyranny -Braverman (1993: 137-9).
[191] Lee 1677: 1.1.169-70.
[192] Most infamously in the work of Robert Filmer *Patriarcha* (1680) - see Vernon (1979: x-xii) or Houston (1991: 95).

> But wind himself a god, you echo him
> With universal cry.[193]

The wide acclaim for a man who claimed himself a god underwrites the plot against his life. Polyperchon is aghast at the memory of Craterus and Hephestion adoring Alexander in Persian robes, hailing him "O son of thund'ring Jove, Young Ammon, live forever!"[194] He was then thrown to the floor in forced obeisance. Later to become one of Alexander's treacherous commanders, he displays no illusions regarding the king's god-like status when daring 'to pronounce Alexander, who would be a god, as cruel as a devil' or pointedly declaiming the conqueror as merely a '*mortal* god that soon must bleed'.[195] As Vernon has noted, the tensest moment of the play – the argument preceding the murder of Cleitus – sees his victim taunt Alexander's claim to Ammon as his father:

> Why should I fear to speak a truth more noble
> Than e'er your father Jupiter Ammon told you:
> Philip fought men, but Alexander women.[196]

In *The Rival Kings* (1677), a play closely following Lee in its production and subject matter, John Banks (1652/3–1706) more light-heartedly subverted Alexander's divinity, by having the conqueror conquered by the love between Statira and the King's rival Oroonbates, who receives enough courage from his love of Statira to no longer 'fear this monster of a name'.[197] As the conqueror is firmly bound to the earth by his mortality, Statira and Oroonbates can escape his grasp through their love, 'and dwell where Alexander ne're shall go, There we would reign, and let him reign below'.[198] Similarly, in *The Rival Queens,* the ignorance of the unfolding plot against him and Alexander's blind faith in the nature of his own divinity reduced him to

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[193] Lee 1677: 1.1.182-192. His entry is greeted with "O son of Jupiter, live forever' (1.2.96).
[194] Lee 1677: 2.1.217.
[195] My emphasis; Lee 1677: 2.1.70. The toast before Alexander's poisoning is 'Live all, you must: 'tis a god give you life.' (4.2.71).
[196] Lee 1677: 4.2.140-2.
[197] Banks: 1677: 2.1. (p. 17).
[198] Banks: 1677: 4.i. (p. 35).

a figure of mortal impotence. Alexander may terrorize the court, but choosing to end the plays with his murder clearly advocated limits to his monarchic power. Alexander may have be feared, but he was ultimately defeated.

The argument against divinity, court culture and slavery had clear and immediate contemporary constitutional relevance, since it associated Alexander's rule with the modes of absolutist France. Deborah Orr has argued that the overt rejection of the policy of Persianisation through the character of Cleitus was an allegory for cultural subjection in the English court being a prelude to political and military dominance by France.[199] Rumours of a monetary subsidy given to Charles by Louis XIV certainly hinted at the prospect of the adoption of the modes of the neighbouring papist regime and made divine and arbitrary associations particularly evocative.[200] Even without direct control by France, the prospect of a change of king held real fears regarding the succession, a topic of great contemporary controversy. Married to a Catholic and next in line to the throne, James, Duke of York had declared his conversion to Catholicism after the Test Act in 1673.[201] Thomas Otway's *Don Carlos* (1676) went to the extremes of having a tyrant inherit the crown. The courtly idiom of the 1670s saw plots initiated by interfamilial dissention, competing queens and 'uncertain' authority, not the themes of restoration and exile so popular in the previous decade.[202] In the year following Lee's play, Titus Oates convinced many of a "Popish Plot" to introduce French style rule to England under the future James II.[203] The fact that Oates's scant and imaginative

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[199] See Orr 2001: 122.
[200] Houston 1991: 97-8.
[201] See Braverman (1993: 114-5) or Munns (1998: 94). Concern with the ramifications of his coronation even concerned loyalists such as Dryden, who in *The Conquest of Grenade* (1670-1) and *Aureng-Zebe* (1675), wrote the first of a clutch of plays that dramatized the effects of a crisis in a ruling family and the destructive potential of the succession. See Braverman (1993: 117-36).
[202] Munns 1998: 94-5.
[203] See Holmes 1993: 123.

evidence could induce widespread hysteria shows how real the concerns in England were regarding Catholic absolutism.[204]

The Rival Queens was a more subtle attack on the dangers of absolutism than Lee's next plays.[205] *Caesar Borgia, Son of Pope Alexander the Sixth* (1679) linked Catholicism with tyranny and Lee's most famous play, *Lucius Junius Brutus* (1680), contained cannibalistic priests in a distorted mockery of transubstantiation in order to demonstrate most graphically the dangers of Catholicism.[206] *The Rival Queens* was not as vitriolic as these works and didn't make so obvious an analogy as plays overtly concerned with succession. The tones of arbitrary or papist government evoked closeness of the British court to that of Louis through matching Alexander's court to the Persian, and suggest that Lee was exploring, if obliquely, very real fear around what might happen after the death of Charles.[207] It was not a direct political allegory, but presented a flavour of contemporary court life and a strong hint of the result of continuing papist influence. Nathaniel Lee's attack on Alexander's tyranny, although set within the politics of the age, lingered as a staple of the stage for a century after it was first produced, reflecting the power and influence of his particular rendering, as well as the ubiquity of the issues of power, love and murder.[208] The many conflicts central to the narrative and the circumstances of the court held all the bite of the 'master of

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[204] See Spurr 1998: 9. Whatever the realities of the 'Plot' itself, it provoked enough fear to initiate a very real response in the Second Test Act (1678), which removed all practising Catholics from Parliament and high public office, and eventually led to a proposed Exclusion Bill to remove James from the succession.

[205] The *Massacre of Paris* (written in 1679-81), catalogued the persecution of the Huguenots, including the graphic execution of protestants by the Queen mother of France. As Marsden (2000: 179-80) notes, the allusion made towards the current King and his brother was so obvious as to be considered an overt attack on the monarchy by the Lord Chamberlain,' who termed it "very Scandalous Expression & Reflections upon ye Government."

[206] See Marsden 2000: 180.

[207] The future James II, although nominally protestant, had married a Catholic.

[208] See for example the publisher's preface to Lee (1776) for the play's widespread and continuing availability in print of Lee (1793) which notes it is still being performed or Vernon (1970) for an overview of its performance history.

politicized horror'; Lee's innovation was to bring Alexander's noted excesses and character to the English court.[209]

The anti-Stuart theorist Algernon Sydney (1623–83) argued in his *Discourses Concerning Government* (1681-3) that absolute monarchy was inherently corrupt.[210] His case was made on the basis that it gave free rein to the passions contained within every man. This led to weakness at the heart of government, an issue that had been dramatically demonstrated in Lee's *Rival Queens,* and led in turn to the slavery of free nations; the corruption of the powerful individual led to corruption for the whole.[211] Like Botero's mirror, Sydney took the lessons of Alexander's life to be of paramount importance to those in power, but on this occasion the nature of the office itself was in question; the solution was not to correct the prince, but to establish constitutional limits. A litany of historical examples serves to demonstrate what Sydney saw as the inexorable corruption of men holding power.[212] Alexander provided the final proof:

> He that desires farther proofs ... may seek them in the Histories of *Alexander* of *Macedon,* and his Successors: He seems to have been endow'd with all the Virtues that Nature improved by Discipline did ever attain, so that he is believed to be the Man meant by *Aristotle,* who on account of the excellency of his virtues, was by Nature framed for a King; and *Plutarch* ascribes his Conquests rather to those, than to his Fortune: But even that Virtue was overthrown by the Successes that accompanied it: He burnt the most magnificent Palace of the world, in a frolick, to please a mad drunken Whore: Upon the most frivolous suggestions of Eunuchs and Rascals, he kill'd the best and bravest of his Friends; and his Valour, which had no equal, not subsisting without his other Virtues, perished when he became lewd, proud,

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[209] Marsden 2000: 179.
[210] In response to Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* (1680) – see Scott (2004).
[211] Sydney 1990*:* 3.13. He noted that, 'The rage of a private man may be pernicious to one or a few of his Neighbours; but the fury of an unlimited Prince would drive whole Nations into ruin: And those very men who have lived modestly when they had little power have often proved the most savage of all Monsters, when they thought nothing able to resist their rage.'
[212] See Houston (1991: 50-155) for an overview.

> cruel and superstitious; so as it may be truly said, he died a Coward.[213]

As a man of initial excellence and prominence, but subsequent degeneration, his example was particularly telling; if it could happen to the most famous and (initially) virtuous man of all, the general rule of the corrupting effects of power was easily proven.[214]

During the Roman Republic, Alexander became a potent political figure because the very category of his paradigm – conqueror and monarch of the east – was a challenge to the dominant political ideology. Alexander may have been praised or chastised after the renaissance, but he did not pose a comparable challenge to any system of belief or political or social convention. When Brende used him as an example of the (non)-virtuous man in the context of civic society, the overt commentary attacked *his* vices and character, but his primacy of place was never questioned; Brende and others had tested Alexander as a man, but they lacked any worry about whether Alexander's model of monarchy or virtue conformed to the demands of contemporary society.[215] This certainly changed as Alexander entered the politics of the Restoration. *The Rival Queens* used the established material to warn of the great dangers to the constitution and the disrespect for individual rights that a ruler such as Alexander could bring; the use of the Alexander as a variegated mirror was extended by the imperative of dramatizing the political present. In the seventeenth century, although the

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[213] Sydney 1990: 2.11. This seems to be an adaption of Cicero's comment directed towards Caesar: 'Let me remind you that even Aristotle's pupil, eminent as were his gifts and excellent as was his conduct, became a cruel and intemperate tyrant once he ascended the throne.' (Cic., *Att.* 299)

[214] It should be noted, however, that Sydney did not consider Alexander an absolute monarch, although the example still shows the extent to which even a man of the highest character can be corrupted. See Houston 1991: chapt. 4.

[215] Like the work of Curtius, Plutarch's *Vitae* offered much in the way of censure and praise, the anecdotal style of the latter often being easily split into identifiable themes. These were works with such a clear portrayal of character that they appealed widely to the aristocracy of Europe who wished to gain instruction of this sort. See Bolgar 1954: 528-9. Alexander had a particularly prominent place even within this classic exemplary tradition, since Plutarch's *Vitae Alexandri* was not only his longest, but Plutarch himself gave it some prestige by the famous premise of methodology – that he was writing 'lives, not history.'

private and public were tacitly imbricated, the vices of the former were not overtly explored as an issue for the latter. What the constitutional unrest in England provoked was an exploration of court against king, where Alexander as a tyrant could offer a timely reminder of the dangers of corruption in the highest office. Lee dramatically exposed the constitutional consequences of what Botero and others had only discussed in terms of the *individual*, while Sydney folded Alexander into a broader attack on the institution of monarchy.

1.3. THE RIVAL KINGS

The fact of the play's production and its continuing popularity confirms that Alexander was a bankable theatrical figure. That he was a target for anti-absolutist writers is suggestive that he was a going concern elsewhere as an *acceptable* figure for emulation in terms of monarchy and princely virtue. Previously overlooked by Brauer and others, evidence for this is prominently displayed in the dedications of the English translation of Quintus Curtius, which are striking not least for attaching *comparatio* to a work that is at best ambivalent about Alexander's character (a move previously noted in the translation of John Brende).[216] The prefaces make (hyperbolic) overtures to prominent persons within society, and often comment upon Alexander's aptness for their particular achievements or personal attributes and potential. There is some ambivalence in Alexander's record, but a penchant for glory and martial achievement is assumed and Alexander is presented as a model for emulation rather than a figure of "mixed" character for moral correction.[217]

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[216] For an overview of the reception of Quintus Curtius Rufus, see Baynham (2001: 1-14). The importance of the dedications and prefaces of such translations has been overlooked in previous studies of Alexander's record in this period, hence their inclusion in this section. Not only are they ample evidence of readership (at least the powerful, moneyed patrons that a translator might wish to court), but often the dedicator gives an overview or highlights of Alexander's career and virtues in the preface.

[217] This is to qualify Brauer's (1980) view of Alexander.

After Brende there was a hiatus of a century and a half, and the Restoration brought a clutch of translations that were effusive in their praise for the author, subject matter and, through explicit parallel, the recipient.[218] The first was published in 1673 by translator and writer Robert Codrington (1601/2–65), a man of ambiguous political allegiances; the work flattered the dedicatee - *Viscount* Cambden, a Stuart loyalist - with a conceit familiar from the works of the Renaissance.[219] Only a mind of similar virtue and spirit of coordinate desires could possibly have the measure of Alexander's stunning successes:

> Great Actions are the Subject of great wits; and no age hath great personages, if not to exceed, yet to second and protect them. But the achievements of *Alexander* the Great, are so great in themselves, that they are rather the subjects of our Wonder then belief; nor can any man be a just Judge of them, who is not imbued with the same spirit of Fortitude, and withal, transported with the same desire of glory.[220]

In a manner reminiscent of Botero, the position of Alexander's fame and achievement is unquestioned, and, as his abilities as a conqueror are presented as the foremost aspect of his good repute, his patron was imbued with similar qualities. Despite the obvious recognition of the destructive aspects of conquest, the achievements of Alexander are excused since he was 'as merciful as he was just.'[221] The only hint of opprobrium otherwise is censure of his vain attempt to conqueror Fortune and transcend fame.

In the preface to the general reader – addressed 'especially' to the soldier - Codrington states Alexander could be an incitement to martial achievement. The familiar context was the claim of history to be instructive upon the

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[218] All are unanimous about the 'genius' of Quintus Curtius as a historian and stylist as well as the aptness of the endeavour of clothing Alexander in English, and the excellence of the translators (after all, they had to sell the book), I will refrain from commenting on the inspiration behind his renaissance, until more research has been conducted. The timing of the resurgence is presumably more than coincidental.
[219] Larminie 2004.
[220] Curtius Rufus 1673: Dedication.
[221] Curtius Rufus 1673: Dedication.

works of god, accompanied by the sense that Alexander was a divine instrument:

> You will finde how Kingdoms are disposed of by Eternal Decrees of Providence; and that when God is pleased to put a period to them, he selects men, and inspires them with Courage and Understanding answerable to that great Work unto which he hath appointed them.[222]

In showing Alexander as an instrument of divine will it was implicit that he acted with virtues in the path chosen for him. There is no mention of the accompanying fall from Fortune's hand or later immorality as given in the work of Clarke or Sleidanus. With this providential premise established, his particularly admirable qualities were his martial ones, skills that enabled him to overthrow a vast and powerful empire:

> None but Alexander could perform what Alexander hath done; and though his course of life was so short, that he did rather destroy then erect an Empire, *yet we may wonder as much at his Resolution in what he undertook*, as at his Success in what he performed. With an inconsiderable Power, with Wicker Targets, and Swords covered with Rust, and a Stock of not above threescore Talents, which he himself confessed was the strength of his Exchequer, he advanced into Asia, and in the compass of a few years, he became Master of all the East, and at that time, of the most Flourishing and Potent Nations of the World. *He never encountered any enemy who he overcame not, nor invaded lands which he subdued not*.[223]

As the hand of god, he achieved mastery of empire. This stands without equivocation, and the emphasis on destructive powers does not detract from his attributes. There is no consideration of his wider character, only his martial glory as exercised though his fortitude in the face of a stern task. Finally, the contemporary value of Alexander is hinted at:

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[222] Curtius Rufus 1673: Dedication.
[223] Curtius Rufus 1673: Dedication.

> the admirable Revolution of States, and from what small beginnings great Powers do arise, is nowhere more apparently to be seen; and by the understanding of the events so long ago abroad, you may draw your Application to things more present and at home.[224]

The vague citation of Alexander as a means of understanding the current world was perhaps a nod to Charles' current Dutch wars, but it was more likely to confirm to the general reader that the subject was still considered particularly instructive and indicative of its value for showcasing martial virtue.

A anonymous translation of 1687 contained two poems commending the endeavours of the translators, but also offering reason for the ruder classes of society to consider the work as ample for instruction:

> Mirrors of Vertue, Fortitude and Wit:
> Who have (as they deserve) just admiration,
> And Raise in low-bred souls a generous passion,
> Exciting in them flames of Aemulation.
> ....
> A Monarch is your Theam, whose Marshal Wit
> By Modern *Hero*'s unequall'd yet.[225]

Yet again Alexander is a mirror, but one worthy *only* of the ardour of the viewer, the distortions seen by Botero and others are not emphasised:

> And if History be a true and impartial account of the actions of famous men in past ages, so it ought to be the rule and example of the present; and in this almost all tempers of our times, may find something as well for their imitation as their wonder.... the noblest Example of all Heroick Performances; An Example! which the most famous Princes since his time have thought their greatest glory, tho without any hopes of equalling him, to imitate.[226]

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[224] Curtius Rufus 1673: Dedication.
[225] Curtius Rufus 1687a: Preface.
[226] Curtius Rufus 1687a: Preface.

Unlike Lee's warning of tyranny, the admission that there was no current Alexander reveals a wistful desire, and the potential for the acceptance of a man of his stature. The effect of the conquest may have been destruction, but there is no regard for any criteria of fame, other than his martial prowess; the vice-ridden aspects of Curtius' Alexander seemed to have escaped the notice of the translator.[227]

In the same year as the Cambridge version appeared, a rival translation by scholars at Oxford came into print with a dedication to Richard Lord Viscount Preston, Lord Lieutenant of the Countries of Cumberland and Westmoreland, an arch-loyalist supporter of the newly installed James II.[228] It cited the work as being the 'History of the Greatest of Men, and the most Famous of Heroes' and made overtures to the family on the basis of the analogous relationship between the dedicatee and Alexander's loyal friend:

> Nor could I introduce him into better company than Your Lordships;...For in Lodging himself in Your Lordships Arms, he has only chosen him a second, and worthier Hephestion. For if Honour and Gallantry deserve the Smiles of the Great, the same Justice that has made you a Favourite of Caesar, entitles you to a Darling of Alexander: He visits Your Lordship therefore as a Friend, and as a yet nearer Alliance between you, if may justly say, You so far resemble him, that like him too, You have the World before you.[229]

Affixed to the work was one further poetic commendation of the translators' undertaking that implies this fantasy of sycophantic indulgence was not constructed entirely without material evidence:

> Thou canst not to the World a Visit pay,
> Nor enter Light in a more Glorious Day.
> Thou comest to see thy own Great Prize of Fame
> Say'd o're by Younger Brothers of the Game;
> Worthies, whom e'en thy own swift Planets bless

[227] Unfortunately there is no further indication – aside from initials – as to who produced the work.
[228] Curtius Rufus 1687b: Preface.
[229] Curtius Rufus 1687b: Preface.

With all thy Laurels Crown'd, amidst no less
Than all thy Impetuous Torrents of Success.
The *German* and *Venetian* Shores rebound
With that Miraculous Triumphant sound,
So swift their Arms, so bright their Glories shine,
That the *Imperial Eagles* Rival Thine.[230]

Recent victories for the Duke gave occasion for the work.[231] The emphasis upon unbridled praise would certainly be an effective strategy in achieving commissions, but undoubtedly, a savvy translation was unlikely to court a potential sponsor through praise of a subject not held in high esteem by the recipient. The dedicatory form demonstrates Alexander's currency as a straightforward target for princely emulation of martial glory. It is uncertain whether these works were a response to Lee's attack, but the Restoration certainly brought Alexander to new heights of acclaim as much as it damaged him.[232] It was via these dedications that Alexander emerged as an unalloyed martial model in overtures *to* the Stuarts and their allies, not only in warnings against them.

After the Revolution of 1688, William quickly became the subject of a parallel between current generals and the archetypical victor:

New Pyramid's raise,
Bring the Poplar and Bayes,
To Crown our Triumphant Commander;
The *French* too shall run,
As the *Irish* have done,

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[230] Curtius Rufus 1687b: Preface.

[231]The martial relevance of Alexander was previously stated in the work of Sir James Turner (1683), who dedicated his work to the then future King James, Duke of Albany and York. This treatise on ancient and modern warfare argued in one particular essay - *Of a Captain General, or Generalissimo* the importance of the King taking personal control of his armies or else risk losing his empire: '*Cyrus* led his armies himself, so did some of his Successors, but when others of them staid at home, and sent their Lieutenants abroad, the *Persian* Monarchy decay'd, and became a prey to the Great *Alexander*, who manag'd his Wars in person, and so did those great Captains of his, who cut out Kingdoms to themselves out of their Masters Conquests; but their Successors lost them by sitting idle at home, and employing their Generals abroad.'

[232] A further study will be required to understand the full extent of this revision and how it was connected to arguments for and against the Stuarts, monarchy and martial virtue in the 1670s and 80s.

Like the Persians, the Persians;
Like the Persians, the Persians,
Like the *Persians* before Alexander.[233]

The French, Irish and their Jacobite allies are compared to the defeated Persians. A further, more complex, comparison of Alexander and William was to be found in the 1690 edition of the Cambridge version, dedicated to the newly crowned Queen Mary and written by poet, playwright, and translator Nahum Tate (1652–1715).[234] Although the invocation is made citing the Queen's mental acuity and her taste in matters of history, it is clear that the purpose of the dedication is to present Alexander as a match for her husband. His marshal prowess is foremost, but it is the thinly veiled comment on the state of England upon his succession to the throne which draws the reader into the situation in William's England:

> From his Youth he discovered a Martial Disposition, being train'd up in the School of War by the greatest Master of that Time, his Father *Philip*. At his first entrance into his Government, which he found embroil'd and perplex'd, his Prudence so composed Affairs, and he so quickly signaliz'd his Courage, that the *Grecian* Provinces made choice of him for their General against the *Persian*. He was indeed from his very Childhood possess'd with an Unaccountable, and, as it were Divine Assurance, that he should in progress of Time put an end to the Encroachments and Tyranny of the *Common Invader*.[235]

This distorts the claim made by Plutarch – that *Macedon* not Greece was being threatened by states it had previously conquered vying for freedom - and passes over the vote for Alexander as *hegemon* of Greece coming conspicuously soon after the destruction of Thebes as an example. Rather than any display of 'courage', the source tradition has Alexander hold Greece

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[233] 'The Royal Triumph of Britain's Monarch' in *Wit and Mirth: Or Pills to Purge Melanchol, Edited by Thomas D'Urfrey* (1719-20), quoted in Erskine-Hill (1996: 41).
[234] Hopkins 2004.
[235] Curtius Rufus 1690: B4. Author's own italics.

at the point of his sword.[236] Instead, it is the turmoil of the recent past and fledging revolution - posed by James – that is the analogy, with the current state of monarchy as 'an Age that has in great measure recovered that Solidity of Judgment, and true sense of Things, so much in Esteem amongst the Antient'. The 'embroil'd and perplex'd' state of affairs were, more specifically, ongoing wars against France and James, who was trying to regain his lost throne. The perceived differences between factions fighting for the crown are drawn through emphasis on the *Grecian* versus *Persian* aspect of Alexander's conquests. This invokes the early career of Alexander acting as *hegemon* of a Greek invasion, ostensibly to redress Persian interference in Greek affairs (potentially Louis' support of the Stuarts) and revenge for the Persian wars.[237] Evoking the French-Persian association with the court culture of the Stuarts, this struck specifically against the '*Common Invader'*. Once the Greeks were "united" by Alexander's rule, now the common enemy was James and his French ally. By association with Alexander William is the exemplification of a ruler, an effect achieved by reminding the reader of Alexander's famous post battle clemency, justice and natural virtues: after victory he was as 'merciful as courageous in fight: obliging and grateful in his temper, though severe in discipline, and an impartial distributer of justice. By his nature more addicted to virtue and glory, than to pleasure and riches.'[238] Apt to praise William is the Alexander of Plutarch and Arrian, rather than the dubious character given by Curtius.

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[236] Plut.,*Vit. Alex*. xi-xiv. Arr., *Anab.* 1.1 has a story that he was simply granted the command (except by the Spartans) and that Athenians acquiesced on his impending approach. Justin 11.2.5 is even briefer.

[237] Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 14. A motif most obvious in Plutarch's account of the burning of Persepolis (Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 38.

[238] Curtius Rufus 1690: A6-B6. 'But his sagacity, as well as Fortitude, was of Reach beyond the most Experienced of his Council, from whose Opinion he would often dissent, but was never in the Wrong**.** His Resolves, (as *Plutarch* well observes) which in their Sentiments seemed Rash, will appear on deep, and thorough Consideration to be the result of true and well-grounded policy.'

The preface ends with the specific linking of William with his predecessor, and the overt extension to William of the divine protection under which Alexander supposedly flourished:

> All which Circumstances must render him [Alexander] a Candidate to Your Majesties Favour, being so far Parallel to the *Alexander of the Present Age.* The progress of whose Glory is Unblemished, the Former seeming to have been permitted in some Things to recede from his Character, to Crown the Perseverance of our Royal Hero, and entirely to Qualify him for the Darling of Providence.[239]

The confusing wording seems to offer Alexander as a parallel to the example of the current King, who is himself a version of Alexander. Rather than engaging in a straightforward *comparatio* this rather tautologous and convoluted comparison was presumably necessary to prevent the monarch from being denigrated as a mere emulator. It allowed the dedicator to separate the King from any negative associations with his vices: William was not to 'recede' in character like his predecessor nor attract the Papist connotations given by Lee's *Rival Queens*. The king could thus be seen to be superior to Alexander in terms of character, while both remained on the side of providence. A further twist gave William the advantage when comparing their respective martial records. The end to which they fought was different, as evidenced by the result of the recent victory over James Stuart at the Battle of the Boyne:

> It would be Sacrilege in me to attempt the mentioning of what He has performed for the Preservation of these Nations. So weak a Genius as mine will best express its Sentiments in silent Admiration. He cannot fail of such as shall do him Right to Posterity, In the mean time, his Virtues and Heroick Actions are, and I hope will long continue, their own Living History. I shall only presume to say, That the *Boyne* till now obscure, shall hereafter be Celebrated equally with the *Granicus*, and the

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[239] Curtius Rufus 1690: A7.

> Memory of Europe's Deliverer Eclipse what was done by the Son of *Jupiter Ammon*.[240]

Combined with all the good parts of Alexander's character, the dedication used the common notion of Alexander as a destructive force but instead painted William as the preserver of nations. With deft footwork, William was conceived to have divine guidance when he achieved military glory, whilst avoiding the slander of destruction, degeneracy or courting his own divinity. This method of doubling and splitting – giving the imitator similar or greater achievements while distancing him from the more negative aspects of Alexander's repute – would be characteristic of Whig acclaimed heroes in the next two decades and a trend explored more fully in the next chapter.[241]

To show how factionalised Alexander was during this period, it should be noted that as much as his virtues were open to acclaim, the list of vices allowed attacks by William's Jacobite opponents.[242] For those who supposed William's coronation to be non-judicial, Alexander's seizure of the Persian Empire from Darius paralleled William's ill-gotten crown.[243] The comparison to Alexander had become so tiresome to his opponents, that a Jacobite Pamphleteer retorted: '"Since our Boobies will be thought to have made a wise Choice of their King, as they call him, and he must be a great Champion, let him be drest up with all the imperfections of *Alexander*, with whom they are pleased so often to compare him."'[244] A more lasting, subtly ironic distortion of the resemblance was encapsulated in John Dryden's *Alexander's Feast; or the Power of Musique. An Ode, in Honour of St. Cecilia's Day*

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[240] Curtius Rufus 1690: B7.

[241] After the glut of translations in the seventeenth century, after 1690 the next were 1755 and 1809, neither with a dedication. For his longevity and the breadth of interpretation see King (1996: 40).

[242] This use of Alexander is unique up until this point in the early-modern world, but not without equivalents in the ancient world i.e. Spencer (2002) on Rome and how he was used against Antony by Augustus or for *imitatio* in Errington (1978) or Meeus (2010) on the Hellenistic period.

[243] See Erskine-Hill 1982: 52.

[244] William Anderton, *Remarks on the Present Confederacy* (1693), quoted in Erskine-Hill (1996: 41). The author was executed for high treason in the same year.

(1697).[245] Set on the evening of the burning of Persepolis, the musician Timotheus manipulates Alexander's sensibilities through a series of stages: inflated self-divinity, wild bacchanalia, lamentation for Darius, lechery for Thais and revenge against Persia. As Erskine-Hill asserts, there is a clear parallel to William drawn not just by the previous associations between the two, but by the timing of the first performance of the piece – on William's triumphal return after being recognised as king by Louis XIV.[246] Dryden – an arch supporter of James - brought Lee's critique full circle and demonstrated the effect of character weakness in a monarch, on the successor to the Stuarts.

These examples show that it was still popular to propose Alexander's glorious conquests for emulation, but that the tones of heroism, immorality and the flavour of tyranny were heightened by a political dialectic. Alexander was directly relevant and a thriving trope of political currency, evidenced through the partisan nature of these deployments. Where Brauer's thesis remains relevant is in the comparisons to William by Nahum Tate's translation. This work stretched the paradigm to omit any negative connotations of Alexander's character from the parallel. This was symptomatic of a society beginning to struggle with the model of kingship that prized conquest and martial glory and one that had seen the potential constitutional downsides of monarch played out in destructive force across the previous century.

1.4. CONCLUSION

What Addison's Chamber exemplifies, and this chapter demonstrates as a whole, is that Alexander excelled when tested for fame in the early-modern period. The fame that carried him into Restoration England and beyond was fundamental to the pre-Restoration works. His military success was

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[245] See Erskine-Hill (1996), Cornochan (1982) for the poem's political traction. For a detailed reading see Smith (1978).

[246] Erskine-Hill 1996: 40-46. Erskine-Hill also asserts that the more direct comment on William as Alexander comes in 'The Cock and Fox' in *Fables Ancient and Modern:* 'He had a high opinion of himself; Though sickly, slender, and not large of limb; Concluding all the World was made for him.'

operative in the premise of Botero, as it had been to the commonplaces of Machiavelli and other renaissance figures. Each of the writers considered above accepted and exploited his fame for subtly different purposes; even Lee had Cassander speak of his murderous exasperation at the extent to which his name was spoken. While this was the fundamental source of his relevance, Alexander's "mixed" character was the reason why he was established as a useful model of instruction: a premise exploited in *The Rival Queens* to tragic effect but elsewhere used for the edification of the aristocratic reader. He was known for his character failings as much as his successes, so good and bad were required to demonstrate their particular moral or political lessons.

George C. Brauer has previously argued that critics during the later years of the Restoration were particularly bitter, showing distaste for Alexander as a negative, tyrannical monarch: 'Alexander's claim to be a god could hardly have pleased a nation that had so recently challenged the divine right of kings.'[247] This chapter has sought to closely define the concerns with the Stuart monarchy: Lee used Alexander as a critique on the nature and future of Stuart rule beyond a general 'anti-tyrannical attitude.'[248] Conversely, if his critics were particularly aggressive, respect for his martial virtue was as strongly stated in the decades following the Restoration. His figure broke free of its mixed style, and became subject to overt and mendacious rendering for political ends. The role of translations in making his singular repute of virtue the subject of controversy and the focus of discussions was crucial. The concern of Brende and his successors was to present a work of value – but also of flattery - to a patron; Alexander's virtue was foremost and necessitated editing of the "mixed" paradigm to see him emerge as an unalloyed model for martial virtue. To understand fully whether this phenomenon was indicative of a broader response to the attack on the

[247] Brauer 1980: 36.
[248] Brauer 1980: 36. But, as Brauer argues, the strong anti-Stuart feeling during the Restoration did not take kindly to Alexander's claim to be a god nor to his autocratic style of rule.

Stuarts requires a further study of other dedications, but the emergence of a partisan Alexander was significant. Stuart kings were critiqued through *comparatio* and, right up until the early-eighteenth century, Alexander could be a figure of Jacobite criticism *and* Whig self-promotion. The carefully defined terms in which he was deployed for this purpose demonstrate unease at the obvious vices given by Curtius and potential political connotations of association with the conqueror. A mirror which once allowed both good and bad to be found, was put to use to mount specific attacks upon opponents. With the past as an arena for politics, a figure once split into virtues and vices was also fractured along ideological lines.

After the turn of the eighteenth century there was still demand for the moralising of Charles Rollin (translated consistently between 1738 and the 1830s) and a need to discuss Alexander's mixed character. To pre-empt the following chapter, the Restoration had, however, initiated an attack not only against Alexander, but also his model of aristocratic virtue; the ambivalence shown in the comparison with William demonstrates that the veracity of certain aspects of virtue or types of monarch - argued by Brauer - were certainly manifest, if often only obliquely. The link between his repute, matters of constitution and, by extension, society was the key legacy of Nathaniel Lee, while the support for William is indicative of his on-going role as a direct marker for martial heroes, which would continue. The next chapter will explore how the critiques of conquest and descriptions of virtue that emerged in the seventeenth century were refined and rejected. Alexander was handily partitioned, filling a costume-box of stereotypes for success and martial virtue, infamous character flaws and, thanks to Lee, tyranny. But Alexander was also ripe to form the basis of a challenge to the paradigm of virtue given by conquerors.

2. PATRIOTS AGAINST PRIGS: ALEXANDER AND CONQUEST IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The works in the previous chapter demonstrate that Alexander's martial achievements assured him the respect and interest of the reader. Dedications that matched the dedicatee to Alexander's achievements, furthermore, avowed the conqueror of Asia as a marker for military glory. The presumption common to both genres was that martial figures were compatible with the health of the polity. Possessing similar failings to Alexander was demonstrably harmful to the morality of the individual, but the consequences that such failings could have for society were not overtly problematized until the Restoration. By presenting the destructive potential of monarchical character in terms of its effects upon the court, Lee's work probed a domain of significant discomfort in England: a king's peccadilloes were a problem for the entire court; his non-venial sins, furthermore, resulted in constitutional crisis. This was a neat and potent attack upon Charles' court culture and absolute monarchy as an institution. The strong accusation made by Lee in *The Rival Queens* was that any retreat from virtue by the monarch would fundamentally conflict with the needs of the polity.

The issue of containing the personal vices of the monarch had been solved through the replacement of the Stuarts during the revolution of 1688 and subsequent reform of the constitution.[249] But the revolution provoked a discourse on the fundamental duties of the aristocracy and, through the example of Alexander, writers sought to renegotiate the ends and form of martial virtue.[250] In the seventeenth century, aristocratic ethics could not entirely be taken for granted without instruction, but if an individual

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[249] The Act of Settlement of 1701 imposed statutory limitations on the monarch, required parliamentary consent for wars and prevented royal interference with the judiciary – Spurr (1998: 13). This led many to extol the virtues of a balanced constitution, a topic returned to throughout the eighteenth century, see Weinbrot (1993: 36-8).

[250] Burtt (1991: 16) notes 'The first years following the Revolution thus saw not only a revived concern with virtue, both political and moral, but significant disagreement over the qualities that constituted the good citizen and the lengths to which government should go to cultivate them. There was not only politics of virtue on offer at this time, but several.'

exhibited virtues, such as courage and temperance, he was guaranteed to be judged in possession of a virtuous character. When assessing prominent individuals from the 1690s, however, there was an acute concern that they should uphold and protect the commonwealth and the new constitution. Critics therefore demanded that personal virtues and achievements should be subordinated to civic service. Broadly republican virtues – lawfulness and preservation of liberty – would weigh most heavily in many assessments of character. The many qualities that writers had lionised when assessing Alexander up until the Restoration were fertile for challenge.

This redefinition of virtue was certainly provoked by England's century of constitutional crisis, but it developed alongside changing attitudes towards the classical world. The late-seventeenth century and the early decades of the next saw English writers renegotiate the place of the classics, particularly the role of the hero. As Weinbrot has demonstrated in the context of the creation of a British imperial identity, the classical heroes who had been so significant when fashioning the values of the Renaissance aristocracy were tested against contemporary moral demands and found wanting.[251] Renaissance humanism had built a (comparatively) straightforward didactic approach upon the texts of the classical world. Although not entirely dispensing with erudition based upon "established truths", the various neo-Classic modes of the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, took a narrower, deliberative, and often "utilitarian"[252] approach to ancient texts and figures.[253] With a flourishing print culture and increasing political diversity from the 1690s, critics looked to the ancient world to identify paradigms of constitutional and social stability, liberty and justice to replace those of

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[251] Weinbrot 1993: 3. This chapter will adopt the same framework although not his teleological reading of this being a *necessary* shift from the 'quasi-European England' to an imperial state.

[252] I use this word as meaning "avowing utility" rather than in any specific philosophical context.

[253] See William Johnson (1969: 52) who notes 'Neo-Classicism was thoroughly empirical. And it was unashamedly utilitarian.'

military might.[254] Competing for prominence during the eighteenth century were heroes from the Bible, the Graeco-Roman world, England's glorious past and Britain's present. This resulted in no clear agreement about what a hero was or what attributes one should have.[255]

This chapter and the one following will explore how various depictions of Alexander provided a crucial lens through which achievement and morality, both personal and national, were filtered. Each of the works considered used Alexander as a parallel for the conduct of politicians and generals, as an exemplar from which typologies of virtue were measured, or a paradigm against which definitions of national values were compared. In this chapter, the works pertain to the conceptualisation of domestic leaders and politics at home and in Europe. Chapter three, conversely, will illustrate at how Britain looked to Alexander to provided context for the nature and forms of British overseas expansion – specifically in North America and Asia. The works considered in chapter three treated Alexander as a parallel for imperial representatives, and a paradigm for the nature and values of empire.

Through identifying three interrelated methods by which Alexander was circumscribed, this chapter will demonstrate how Alexander would gradually become one type of hero that many agreed Britain could do without. First, between the 1690s and 1740s, explorations of greatness, fame and virtue shifted the definition of acceptable achievement away from Alexander (section 2.1). Second, less well attested in existing scholarship, *comparatio* between ancient and modern generals also relegated Alexander beneath the values of British heroes (section 2.2).[256] Finally, Alexander's *damnatio* culminated in works that drew upon refreshed Roman Stoic notions of conquest to paint him as the archetypical criminal conqueror (section

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[254] See Spurr (1998: 6) for broad literary and political context.

[255] William Johnson (1980: 25) writes of a lack of 'consensus in Stuart-Georgian England as to the attributes of the hero, the constituent elements of heroism, or even as to whether the heroic concept had any validity.'

[256] Brauer (1980) focuses upon Britain's enemies but not so much on its own heroes. Wild (2004) mentions Marlborough in passing but focuses in the main upon the Duke of Cumberland, a figure to whom the existing template is applied. Marlborough is crucial in creating the categories in the first place.

2.3).[257] In a self-confident assertion of contemporary moral superiority, these were considered superlative by reason of their civic virtue. It should be stressed that the commonplace Alexander remained (the great conqueror, the honourable victor or the corrupted tyrant), but that prominent poets and critics consistently ruled him out as they sought a hero conducive to the common good.[258]

2.1. CHAMBERS OF FAME

> —Thus, long ago,
> Ere heaving bellows learn'd to blow,
> While organs yet were mute;
> Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
> And sounding lyre,
> Could swel the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.[259]

In addition to its contemporary political bite, Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* (1697) was an attack on a heroic creed that espoused martial vitality and the attributes that underpinned it.[260] The popularity of this mode had sustained Alexander's relevance (if not his repute) after the Renaissance, and continued to be a legitimate analogy for aristocratic values in the 1690s, as evidenced by the editions of Curtius and the praise of William III. The obvious military failings of Charles' reign had already undermined the type of heroic praise given by Dryden to the Stuarts in the early years of the Restoration. Then a legitimate form of heroism was courage in war backed by the certainty of

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[257] Brauer (1980) similarly discusses both these trends with overlapping examples but a different emphasis.

[258] Although not considered in detail here, Alexander did continue as a commonplace of morality in a manner similar to the works considered in the previous chapters. See, for example, *From my House in the Minories* (1732: 33) for passions leading to Cleitus' murder; Swift (1962) for his treatment of Darius' family and Boyle (1752: 157), who regrets that the honourable Alexander did not appear in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). For a fuller list see Wild (2004: 281) or Brauer (1980: 46). There was also continued general use of arguments from classical history as having weight in practical politics without specific ideological points – see Peters (1987).

[259] Dryden 1697: 7.155-160. The story has its roots with Xenophantus stirring Alexander with his flute to do battle: Sen. *De Ira* 2.2.6 or Dio Chry., *Orat* 1.1 for Timotheus.

[260] See chapter 1.1.

being God's vicegerent.[261] As Timotheus bent Alexander to his whim and conquered the all-conquering hero, the artist was seen to triumph over the warrior. In showing distaste for William, Dryden exposed the weaknesses of the heroic model: such types could be manipulated in mood and action, and made to fawn over a common courtesan before burning Persepolis on a whim.[262] The triumph of art showed Dryden's disappointment in monarchy, exemplified a widespread unease at the heroic model represented by Alexander, and also a desire to enunciate new typologies. Opposition to the ancient hero came from both critics and loyalists of the new regime; William would be the last king to be officially painted in his armour, as a monarch proudly displaying his martial prowess.[263]

When William Temple (1628-99) – a close advisor to William and Mary – wrote *Of Heroic Virtue* in 1690, he expounded why conquerors had slipped to such an uneasy position and redirected his reader away from such corrupted figures.[264] The work was a detailed history of the 'antiquated shrine' of virtue treating great leaders from the past as candidates for the title of hero. It moved beyond what the author saw as the normal figures considered in such discussions – those of the ancient world – and considered more recent paragons, such as Tamerlane, but this was not before a brief summary of the usual suspects. While he commended Alexander on the personal attributes that contributed to his glory (courage and 'boldness of enterprise'), Temple's objection was due in part to familiar vices: 'intemperance', 'anger', 'lust', 'cruelties' and 'pride'. He concludes by questioning 'whether his virtues or his faults were greatest'.[265]

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[261] William Johnson 1982: 25-7. For affirmation of Charles' position due to divine right with reference to the Iliad, see Weinbrot (1993: 193).
[262] A sentiment repeated in his eulogy to friend and poet Anne Killigrew, who herself placed female success over masculine virtue - Scodel (1998: 125).
[263] As William Johnson (1982: 29) puts it, 'Stuart heroism was laughed away as sycophantic puffery. The basic centuries-old concept began a process of ideological mitosis, its component threads separating from each other.'
[264] He was a close advisor to William III and prominent statesman under Temple and also engineered the marriage of William and Mary - Monk (1963: xii-xv, 99). My discussion is indebted to Brauer (1980: 38).
[265] Monk 1963: 104.

The familiar "mixed" character assessment was not the only basis on which Alexander was censured.[266] Temple rejected the king from his deliberations primarily because he was not to be considered hero at all, despite his overt courting of the title: 'he attained not the esteem, nor appellation of a hero, though he affected and courted it by his mother's stories of his birth, and by the flatteries of the priest and oracle of Jupiter Ammon.'[267] It was his lack of attributes demonstrably beneficial to civic society that counted most against Alexander's claim to heroic virtue. In Temple's view, the achievements of great men could not be destructive acts of conquest or even the internal perfection of mind or character. Adopting the presumption that man has a duty to provide service to the commonwealth, Temple wanted his heroes to be

> of general good to mankind in the common uses of life, orders, or governments, as were of most ease, safety, and advantage to civil society. Their valour was employed in defending their own countries from the violence of ill men at home, or enemies abroad: in reducing their barbarous neighbours to the same forms and orders of civil lives and institutions; or in relieving others from the cruelties and oppressions of tyranny and violence.[268]

As Brauer puts it, heroes had to be 'constructive' and, if they were not fighting for the polity's protection or putting it in order with laws, there was little place for warriors.[269] From the ancient world, those that achieved Temple's standard, he thought to have been remembered as gods (Jupiter, Apollo and Minerva and the rest of the pantheon). In historical times, Temple argued that Cyrus was the 'truest character that can be given to heroic virtue.' When founding the Persian Empire, 'he adorned it [with] excellent constitutions and laws'.[270] Mohammed and Confucius are also

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[266] Chapter 1.1.
[267] Monk 1963: 104.
[268] Monk 1963: 99.
[269] As argued by Brauer (1980: 38), who notes that "the concept of the hero was the insistence that such a man must be constructive rather than destructive – that he must benefit mankind."
[270] Monk 1963: 103.

praised as was Tamerlane - a conqueror *and* legislator - and Temple's patron William. Alexander's achievements were not in keeping with the need to protect and develop further the common good because 'he instituted no orders or frame of government.' Instead, he 'rather corrupted and disordered those he found.'[271] Alexander's character flaws do not hold up to examination, but then they never had. His chivalry, his ambition and his quality of mind had re-balanced the scales of judgement in previous accounts, and the key symptom of his virtue – his martial achievements – had meant that his position was unassailable, however distasteful his personal qualities. Tested within the crucible of civic utility, Alexander's attributes and achievements no longer ensured him the title of hero.

After finishing his discussion of more recent models, Temple concluded with a redefinition of heroic virtue and how it could be attained. Stratifying the broad definition given at the outset of his discussion – one which encompassed expansion - his new model relegated conquest to the 'second rank in pretentions of virtue'. The first was occupied with consideration for those that imposed 'just orders and laws'. Despite respect for Cyrus, conquerors are designated second best, since conquest was to be considered 'but the slaughter and ruin of mankind.'[272] The latter point refreshed the critique given previously by the Roman Stoics, particularly Seneca, who saw little glory in the destruction of nations and men. Temple updated it to match the demands of the English polity.[273] At least Cyrus warranted an honourable mention. Since his conquests had no broader effects, Alexander did not receive admiration even as an outmoded paradigm. The last line of Temple's *Of Heroic Virtue* was a particularly cutting rejection of his claim to divinity:

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[271] Monk 1963: 105.
[272] Monk 1963: 172.
[273] For instance Sen., *Ben.* 12 which says '[Alexander] was from his boyhood a brigand and desolator of nations, a pest to his friends and enemies alike, whose greatest joy was to be the terror of all mankind, forgetting that men fear not only the fiercest but also the most cowardly animals, because of their evil and venomous nature.'

> and if, among the ancients, some brave men have been esteemed heroes by the brave achievements of great conquests and victories, it has been by the wise institution of laws and government, that others have been honoured and adored as gods.[274]

A barb at Alexander's divine aspirations and presumably those of the Stuarts, the possibility of an Alexander-type becoming celebrated for conquests and personal achievements was pointedly rejected.

In contrast to Samuel Clarke and other post-Renaissance writers, who compared a variegated character against a moral template, testing Alexander against a republican respect for a mixed constitution was an important innovation. Temple eschewed the self-glory of individuals and provoked a series of similar attempts to write-down Alexander's style of virtue, especially by many of Temple's disciples or those intellectually indebted to him. Unlike Giovanni Botero, who began his treatise by accepting the weight of history's judgement, Temple felt he could free himself from previous definitions of achievement, and not accept wholesale the heroes of the ancient world.

The legacy of Temple was that the main criticism levelled against Alexander in the first decades of the eighteenth century was that he represented the kind of virtue that should be quarantined from definitions acceptable in a civic context.[275] Returning to Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, when they convened the Chamber of Fame, they did so on the basis that

> there are two kinds of Immortality; that which the Soul really enjoys after this Life, and that imaginary Existence by which Men live in their Fame and Reputation. The best and the greatest Actions have proceeded from the Prospect of the one or the other of these; but my Design is to treat only those who have chiefly

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[274] Monk 1963: 172. This is missed in Brauer's discussion, as are the reasons for the "writing-down" of Alexander's virtue rather than its destruction.
[275] Brauer (1980: 38) is correct in observing the important legacy of Temple's piece.

> proposed to themselves the latter as the principal reward of their Labours.[276]

The rubric of 'Fame and Reputation' that ensured Alexander's primacy in the Chamber as it was to appear in *The Tatler* was not measured by weight of virtue. Addison's criteria of the 'imaginary', therefore, revealed the exercise to be a celebration of acclaim and not a case for Alexander as a model of a hero.

Addison and Steele's version of the Chamber was only one of many that took their lead from Temple to explore themes connected with achievement – variously termed 'fame', 'glory' and 'heroism' - in the early decades of the eighteenth century.[277] Having read *Of Heroic Virtue* as a boy, Alexander Pope, imagined a Temple of Fame. He combined both of Addisons' categories of virtue, granting admission on the basis of fame, while allowing himself the license to judge between inductees according to their moral character.[278] The 'Youth' who belied the 'Libyan God' (a reference to Alexander's claim to be the son of Zeus Ammon) was still first to be espied within the Temple, surrounded by the spoils of his campaigns:

> Within stood Heroes, who thro' loud alarms
> In bloody fields pursu'd renown in arms.
> High on a throne with trophies charg'd, I view'd
> The Youth that all things but himself subdu'd;
> His feet on sceptres and tiara's trod.

The renown and the trophies are not enough to convince Pope. The Greek warrior most admired was not Alexander, but one unconcerned with individual glory:

> But chief were those, who not for empire fought,

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[276] Bond 1985: vol. 2, no. 81: pp. 13-21. This number was written by Addison, although the last two lines were contributed by Steele.

[277] This is indicative of a widespread popularity of discussions of the relative merits of historical figures in this context. The chamber was inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 12.39-63, an inspiration explicitly stated in, for example, Addison's 1712 edition of *The Spectator* in Bond (1965: Vol. 4. 439, pp. 42-5).

[278] See Tillotson 1962: 231.

But with their toils their people's safety bought:
High o'er the rest Epaminondas stood.[279]

The patriot of Thebes had defeated the Spartans at Leuctra to preserve the liberty of the city.[280] Thanks to his selfless actions, Pope elevated Epaminondas to the first rank of heroes alongside Timoleon (reformer of Syracuse), Scipio (protector of the Roman Republic) and Marcus Aurelius (termed the 'patron of mankind').[281] Most of the positive examples were patriots or connected with liberty in a statement of the general prerogatives of republican virtue. Without similar civic function, Alexander's achievement was excluded from the highest level of acclaim. Pope's temple was illustrative of the ambivalence towards, and selective use of, the classical past.[282] He included Virgil in the first rank for his talents, but was heavily critical of his dissimulation and his ready obsequiousness when producing the *Aeneid* for his master. That Pope would compartmentalise Virgil, but completely relegate Alexander - a figure so apt for compartmentalisation in previous decades – indicated the extent to which Alexander's modes had fallen into disrepute.

The radical French writer Charles-Irénée Castel, Abbé de Saint-Pierre (1658-1743), also made a sustained attack on Alexander's civic utility. In a similar fashion to Addison, he sought to separate the achievements of Alexander from the civic duties of prominent individuals, this time expressed, according to the criteria of greatness:

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[279] Pope 1715: 150-152.
[280] Presumably from Nep. *Epam.,* since Xenophon only names him twice in the *Hellenica* at 7.1.41 and 7.5.4 ff.
[281] Pope 1715: 166-7. 'And wise Aurelius, in whose well-taught mind; With boundless pow'r unbounded virtue join'd, His own strict judge, and patron of mankind.' The notion of conquest for conquest's sake was also attacked by *The Spectator* in the previous year on religious grounds, reflecting the 'High church' view entangling godliness with service to the British State - see Burtt (1991: 19-22). Citing the emperor Julian's praise of Marcus Aurelius, for his aim to be like the gods, over the selfish aims of Alexander (conquest) or Caesar (to gain the highest office) and Augustus (to rule well) although the latter gained an honourable mention in *The Spectator,* Bond (1965: vol. 5., n.634., pp.167-9). Other mentions by Tickell in n.610; Budgell: nos. 337 and 379; Byrom n.593. Passing mention of Alexander by Addison made in nos. 31, 36, 39, 127, 415, 471.
[282] See Weinbrot 1993: 78-9.

> We ought not to confound, as the Vulgar does, a powerful Man with a Great Man. Power arises from different conjunctures of Fortune, or rather from different outward dispositions of Providence: but inward qualities alone make a great man, and Great men alone deserve our esteem, our praises and our inward respect. As for outward bows, they are the lot of a powerful man. Nay, we ought not to confound a Great Man, with an Illustrious Man. I shall show the difference.[283]

Translated into English and published as 'A Discourse of the Abbot De St. Pierre upon true Greatness, and the difference between a Great Man, and an Illustrious Man' (1726) in the *Memoires of Literature* magazine, the essay included lawgivers, and men of learning (like Descartes) in addition to men of military achievement. His criteria consisted of 'their talents to overcome great difficulties', their zeal for the public good and 'the greatness of the advantages which they have procured, either to Men in general, or to their Fellow-citizens in particular.' The latter criterion was fashioned in view of his vision for European harmony based upon common trade interests, governed by a confederacy, as opposed to a European universal monarchy attempted by Louis XIV of whom he was critical.[284] Judged on his ability to provide a service to the public good, Alexander could not live up to his fellow Greek:

> Epaminondas appears to be the Greatest Man among the Greek Captains. 'Tis true that Alexander made a greater noise by his great conquests; but ...the undertakings of Alexander had no commendable motive, since he acted only for his own interest and advancement; a motive, that has nothing truly great in it... [Epaminondas acted for] the safety and happiness of his Fellow-citizens; a very honest, a consequently very commendable motive.[285]

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[283] De Saint-Pierre 1726.
[284] De Saint-Pierre had negotiated the peace treaty of Utrecht (that ended the War of Spanish Succession) - see Hont (2005: 27-8).
[285] De Saint-Pierre 1726: 259.

De Saint-Pierre's preference for Epaminondas underlined the principle that heroes could be judged upon their utility.[286] He continues,

> Enterprises that are neither commendable, nor virtuous, because their motive is not the public good, may sometimes have a seeming greatness by a great success, such as those of Alexander. Great difficulties that are overcome raise our admiration, and show either a great courage, or great abilities, but if the motive of those enterprises is mean and common, if it does not concern the public good. It has nothing in it that is virtuous ... may indeed make a man very illustrious, very much renowned, but they can never make a great man.[287]

Assuming man's inherently constructive duty toward his society, Alexander-types could not exemplify greatness even if displaying personal virtues that would otherwise have been praised. De Saint-Pierre therefore concluded that 'Epaminondas is a Great Man, and Alexander is only a celebrated Conqueror, a king of great reputation among kings, in a word, he is only an Illustrious Man.' If not acting in the interests of society Alexander's deeds could only result in a lesser designation.[288]

Yet, the need for Temple, De Saint-Pierre, Addison and Pope to offer some rank or category to Alexander demands a caveat to this conclusion. Alexander's claim on virtue was not entirely written-off – merely relegated - indicating a difficulty in negotiating the same weight of historical prestige that had confronted Botero over a century earlier. Alexander's was still potent, evidenced by the failure to entirely destroy his reputation despite having the ammunition and cause – civic virtue - to do so. This suggests that these authors were pushing against wider opinion that still respected the

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[286] It was not just Alexander that failed this common test. As Weinbrot (1993: chapt. 1) has shown, dissatisfaction with the attributes of certain paradigms did not stop at individuals. Imperial Rome was widely seen as negative paradigm for a nation that now had achieved constitutional balance and obedience to laws in its government.

[287] De St Pierre 1726: 259-60.

[288] Temple Stanyan's *Grecian History* (1707: A6) also placed Epaminondas as the 'Greatest Man of Greece.'

self-affirming martial figures from the ancient world.[289] Handel's opera *Alessandro* (1726) was able to draw upon established set-pieces from the previous century, delightfully brimful of salacious intrigue.[290] The central plot-device was (after Lee's play) Alexander's vexed love life, including a scene during which Alexander's temper is undone when torn between two women. Likewise, he enjoys the obsequies of court flatterers, and mistreats Cleitus when he will not pay the king obeisance, leading to war against his companions.[291] Conversely, Alexander resounds as a glorious conqueror and courageous warrior, opening the play by leaping alone with a flourish into the fortress at Oxidraca and routing the enemy. Finally, he shows magnanimity in the face of plots against him: where once the king punished arbitrarily, Cleitus is *not* murdered and the crimes against his men are downplayed. The happy resolution of his divided court presumably reflected a wish for a king more in keeping with the reformed monarchy and possessing less of a tin-ear to the rights of his subjects.[292] But the audience clearly still demanded heroic bombast – a mode aptly suited to the operatic form - and Alexander provided an awesome spectacle. De Saint-Pierre's 'illustrious man' had box-office appeal in early opera, albeit after some

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[289] This is a speculative conclusion in lieu of a deeper study.

[290] King (1996: 44) states, for example, that 'Richard Steele, in his criticism of Lee's play, would have preferred not to see Alexander portrayed as "a monster of lust, or of cruelty" and more as that "glorious character of generosity and chastity, in his treatment of the beautiful family of Darius."' More broadly he (1996: 54) notes that 'the relationship of the playwrights' Alexander to the historical picture was commonly criticized in eighteenth-century English writings on Lee's play.' However, King's argument (1996: 38) that the Augustan view of Alexander 'survived largely unchallenged until perhaps the second half of the eighteenth century, when the cult of the hero was dying out', is misleading given the mixed repute discussed in chapter 1 and the attacks on his image that will be discussed below.

[291] Throwing him to the ground in what King (1996) highlights as a well repeated motif, during Lee's work, and by an enraged, drunken, mop-wielding Alexander in Cibber's version.

[292] See King (1996: 46-51) for the "heroic" orchestration and setting of this scene, a detailed exposition of the plot and analysis of its situation within contemporary traditions of Alexander's reputation. King contextualises works on Alexander and history more generally, when he notes that 'history was essentially synonymous with biography, and it had overtly didactic function: the actions of great men were studied in order to learn how to conduct oneself appropriately.' King goes too far in stating that 'Handel's operas were viewed similarly, at least by some members of the audience', since, as he acknowledges there is no direct record of response to *Alessandro* in particular.

significant concessions to the anti-tyrannical attack made by Lee's *The Rival Queens*. King argues that 'Alexander represented the greatest of all warriors'; if considered a regressive figure by some writers he was still considered a model for martial achievement by others.[293]

Similarly, the on-going popularity of *The Rival Queens* indicates that exploration of monarchy and tyranny had certainly not lost its public magnetism after the Revolution. The fascination with absolutist kings was sustained not least due to the continued conflict with Louis XIV during the 1690s and 1700s, and the sporadic spectre of the return of the Stuarts.[294] The toning down of controversy and emphasis on pomp, however, also suggests a recession from political relevance. In addition to Handel's revision, the writer and Poet Laureate, Colley Cibber, burlesqued *The Rival Queens*. Cibber ridiculed the hyperbolic prose of Lee. and turned the once tyrannical Alexander into an ineffectual king. Instead of a fearful tyrant, a spoiled, child-like figure drunkenly murders Cleitus with a mop and swoons in affection for Statira, who herself reminisces about the pseudo-maternal relationship she once enjoyed. The ravisher of the Persians was subverted into a preposterous man-child, shorn of his ability to shock and terrify.[295] The re-imaginings of Alexander by the disciples of Temple may have taken place within a vexed debate on aristocratic virtue, but Alexander was no longer the sharpest of political allegories.[296] Despite the lingering fear of Jacobites and Louis, the battle against Alexander figures had been won (*in public* at least).

In the decades following the Revolution, the search for republican forebears of virtue from the classical world witnessed the predominance of

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[293] King (1996: 58) also mentions the selection by Gulliver of Alexander as showing a desire for 'Pomp and Magnificence'.

[294] The last throes of the Jacobites were the defeat of the Young Pretender at the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

[295] Cibber 1729: 6. '[I] lov'd him, Dirty Dear, once as he was,/ And took him daub'd all or'e with Persian Blood, / Kiss 'd his poor Thumps and Bruses, / wash'd em o're And o're like any Thing/ Then snatch'd him up, Laid him all Night in my bare Bosom snug;/ Nurs'd like a Child, and Hush'd him with my Lulla-bys.'

[296] As explored in detail by Burtt (1991). The removal of the Stuarts from the succession ignited a discourse upon public virtue, certainly not limited to the Whig cabal that had instigated the 1688 revolution.

those men that resisted Caesar's tyranny in the late-republic. This oppositional relationship was a more apposite means of exploring how the new constitutional monarchy could be best protected. In Addison's *Cato* (first performed in 1713), for example, Caesar stands for the potential for 'unchecked tyranny' and Cato for honesty, virtue, and liberty. Together these two characters embody the values that would either preserve or destroy the constitution. Cato's principles could be championed by both the dominant Whigs and opposition Tories, showing that the premise of the argument had moved beyond the battle between those who would support the Stuart establishment and those, like Cleitus, who would die resisting tyranny.[297] Alexander was not a relevant enough figure to embody the anti-republican bogeyman. He was a politically sanitized figure, but obviously still enjoyed by the audience.[298] But the example of Alexander demonstrates there was no a consensus on the place of "selfish" virtue. The hesitancy to entirely exclude Alexander seen above and his popularity in opera shows that the *areté* of the martial individual was not universally rejected.

During a flourishing of periodicals, novels, dialogues and poetry in the generation after Temple, the definition of 'heroic virtue' was pushed beyond Alexander's reach. He was excluded because his particular accomplishments and attributes were incompatible with serving the public good. Gone was the simple binary choice that shuffled achievements and positive attributes into the category of "virtue" and his crimes into the category of "vice". A hero

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[297] Walker (2003: 93) argues "Cato's defence of liberty is a defence against arbitrary rule and the imposition of alien political ideas," crucially a theme which did not omit support from either Whig or Tory. All would associate themselves with the protection of the new establishment, it was merely a question of means and values espoused in doing so - see Walker (2003: 98) who quotes Addison: "to promote the safety, welfare, and reputation of the community in which we are born, and of the constitution under which we are protected."

[298] See Turner (1986) for the importance of Rome. Outside of concerns with monarchy, Burtt (1991: chapt. 1) argues that the debate on public virtue raged hottest on the extent and nature of government involvement in the affairs and liberties of the citizen, and particularly protection from the tyranny of the court. The general acceptance of the premise of social contract theory meant that factional politics took place within broadly Whig principles (the assent of the people and other tenets behind the 1688 revolution, See McCrea (1981) for this broad political consensus.

was to be primarily judged *in the round* according to a determining principle: only by benefiting mankind or polity could a man of weapons achieve the highest station in any Britannic chamber of virtue. The redefinition of virtue and, specifically, the role of the hero within a civil context led to the preferment of Epaminondas (if martial valour was required). Others from the ancient world, like Cato, emphasized the 'judicial and civic aspect of heroism'.[299] There was still the Grenadier Guards – with their "talk of Alexander" – or of the bombast of opera, but there were myriad alternatives: elsewhere Steel wrote of Jesus' heroic virtue, attained through suffering, while Addison argued that one did not even have to be male or an adult to be a hero.[300] Temple and his acolytes were broadly supportive of the ancients in their respect for form and format of classical texts.[301] There was, however, little deference for the underlying morality of conquerors. There was a tendency to pick and choose between ancient heroes in line with the needs of the times, and place the particular moral demands of the present above respect for the past. Amidst a demand for heroes that upheld social duties, it was the focus on Alexander's utility - a premise never challenged by Botero and others figures of the Renaissance – that brought Alexander's fame into question.[302]

2.2. HEROES OF LIBERTY

A selective implementation and revision of ancient values underpinned the shift in virtue illustrated above. There was now a willingness to celebrate the improvements that moderns had made upon ancient forms. From Jonathan Swift's *Battle of the Books* (1704 as part of his *A Tale of the Tub*) to the mock-epic of Alexander Pope's *Rape of the Lock* (in *Lintot's Miscellany* in 1712), this competitive turn was wildly apparent in various forms of early-eighteenth-

[299] William Johnson 1982: 31.
[300] William Johnson 1982: 32-5.
[301] As espoused by Temple's famous *Ancient versus Modern Learning* (1690) or Swift's *Battle of the Books* (1704).
[302] See William Johnson (1969: 61) who notes the desire for heroes that "conform to social demand."

century literature as British writers sought to better their ancient predecessors.[303] A similarly agonistic look towards past heroes was explicitly manifest in the modes and achievements of contemporary kings and commanders. Although they had demoted the general category of virtue espoused by ancient conquerors, Temple, Pope and others could not ignore the importance of warriors fighting for the protection of the polity, nor create *sui generis* a martial typology. Wars against various pretenders to the English or British crowns and conflicts that resulted in war on the continent would still require ways of celebrating martial heroes and their forms were drawn in contrast with those of the past. These comparisons adopted the same test of utility visible in definitions of virtue. *Comparatio* with Alexander specifically championed the defence of liberty as the distinguishing characteristic of contemporary British heroes.

Comparing individuals on the basis of their greatness developed the convention of Plutarch's *Vitae* of famous Romans and Greeks, although Livy's imagined conversation between Scipio and Hannibal about the greatest commanders of the past provided an alternative starting point for such discussions.[304] The French émigré Charles Saint-Évremond (1613-1703) prefaced his *Judgement of Alexander and Caesar* by acknowledging that the weight of their achievement and acclaim had led all conquerors into *comparatio*:

> 'tis a consent almost universal, that *Alexander* and *Caesar* have been the greatest men of the world; and all those who have concerned themselves to judge of them, have believed, they

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[303] See Weinbrot (1993: chapter 3) for examples of the movement from imitation to emulation.

[304] Livy 35.14.11 'Africanus asked Hannibal whom he considered to be the greatest commander, and the reply was, "Alexander of Macedon, for with a small force he routed innumerable armies and traversed the most distant shores of the world which no man ever hoped to visit." Scipio smiled and asked, "What would you say if you had vanquished me?" "In that case," replied Hannibal, "I should say that I surpassed Alexander and Pyrrhus, and all other commanders in the world." Scipio was delighted with the turn which the speaker had with true Carthaginian adroitness given to his answer, and the unexpected flattery it conveyed, because Hannibal had set him apart from the ordinary run of military captains as an incomparable.'

> obliged Conquerors that have come after them, by finding some resemblance between their Reputation, and their Glory. *Plutarch* after having examined their Nature, their Actions, their Fortune, leaves to us a liberty of deciding, which he durst not take.[305]

It was not just the conquerors themselves who were so obliged. Since Plutarch had omitted a *syncrisis* from his most famous work, writers such as Montaigne and Saint-Évremond found ample cause to explore the arguments for and against the two most famous ancient warriors. The great duo reappeared together with clichéd regularity, but the precedent of conducting *comparatio* inspired the extension of the format to include other figures of comparable achievement from ancient and contemporary times.[306]

This chain of heroes was instructive, but it was also celebratory. After a general discussion of greatness, an anonymous work of 1691 makes the judgment between Alexander and Caesar (with some honourable mention of Scipio) in favour of the latter, on the basis that Alexander lacked self-control and faced inferior opposition. William's current achievements, however, show potential to raise himself above all three:

> I say I shall only add, that if a certain Prince in the World now in Arms for the Liberties of Europe, had but that Success in the ensuing Campaign, which both his Prudence and Valour deserves, as we hadn't much reason to doubt it; future ages will without any Flattery think him greater than all three together.[307]

Using Plutarch as base from which to establish a comparison, this constituted simple and effective flattery, despite the author's claim to sober judgement.

Caesar and Alexander were deployed most consistently in praise of John Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough, who commanded forces in England during William's victory at the Battle of the Boyne (1690) and took control of

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[305] Saint-Evremont 1672: 5-6. He cites Montaigne as his immediate predecessor and blames the popularity of the topic on the versions (of Plutarch) by Vaugelas and D'Ablancour. See Brauer (1980: 35) for background.
[306] In fact most of the comparisons pay mere lip service to the genre.
[307] *Question 2. Whether Alexander or Julius Caesar were the greater Man?* 1691.

the army during the War of Spanish Succession. At Blenheim in 1704, he won a significant victory for the British and Dutch Alliance against French and Bavarian forces on the banks of the Danube. The comparison of Alexander with both Marlborough and his ally Prince Eugene of Savoy (1663-1736) had been established in the first few issues of *The Tatler.* This time the contemporary heroes offer a way into the Plutarchian comparison:

> The present great Captains of the Age, the Duke of *Marlborough*, and Prince Eugene, having been the subject of the Discourse of the last Company I was in, it naturally led me into a consideration of *Alexander* and *Caesar*, the Two greatest Names which ever appear'd before this century.[308]

Similarly, Steele later finished off Addison's dream of the Chamber of Fame with a 'noise of a cannon' to mark the taking of Mons by Marlborough's army in the war against Louis XIV. He noted it to be 'an agreeable change to have my thoughts diverted from the greatest of among the dead and fabulous heroes, to the most famous among the real and the living.'[309] Quoting from Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, in a previous edition, Steele explained why such comparison had relevance to the British nation. He cited the origins of '*Roman* Greatness', to 'particular men, who were born for the good of their country, and form'd for great attempts'. Presuming to pre-empt the reader in making a connection with the hero of Blenheim, he praised Marlborough and cited him as an example of Britain having 'great and able men for publick affairs' that could compete with any from antiquity.[310] The Plutarchian reverie and contemporary events were elided to buttress the

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[308] Bond (1985: vol.1, n.6, pp. 61-2). The outcome was that 'they had an equal Greatness of Soul', but Caesar's was more corrected and allay'd by a mixture of prudence and circumspection.' The parallel case for judgment is the mutiny at the Hydaspes when Alexander says he will go on alone, which risked his men calling his bluff, as opposed to Caesar who praised the tenth legion as loyal and brave thus making sure the rest would follow.

[309] Bond (1985: vol.2, n.6, pp. 61-2).

[310] Bond (1985: Vol.1 no. 5 p. 53). He admires his 'calm Courage', 'well-govern'd Temper', 'patient ambition' and 'affable behaviour.' Each implicitly qualified aspects of character associated with Alexander noted for his overwheening ambition, loss of self-control, rashness in battle and tyranny towards his subjects.

celebration of a nation's heroes. For a patriotic advocate of the nation against its contemporary enemies, these comparisons were meant to reassure the reader about the safety of constitution and polity in the hands of its warriors.

But Steele and others did not make contemporary generals merely the equivalent of their prototypes. The slippage of the foremost ancients from their exalted position was explicit. Their removal was conducted through careful differentiation of their aims from those of Britain's heroes. Just like Epaminondas before Thebes, when William was predicted to eclipse Caesar and Alexander, his mission of 'Protection of Liberty' was enough to clearly articulate his utility: he had defeated the Stuart threat and saved England from subjection to a Catholic tyrant. The cause of liberty was fundamental to the panoply of British heroes; it was a sure sign of the civic utility demanded as inherent in contemporary generals. The preservation of liberty at home, and promulgation abroad, was at the core of republican arguments for martial valour.[311] In the decades after the removal of the Stuarts, this was most clearly articulated in the case of Marlborough for resisting Louis in Europe.[312] Admiration for his protection of liberty was emphasised by Steele in a dedication to the Duke of a collection of *The Spectator*. Obliquely referencing Caesar as 'the most able and fortunate Captain, before Your Time', Steele draws out Marlborough's superiority, by splitting the aims of their conquests. Using a quote borrowed from Cicero, Steele notes

> You have passed that Year of life wherein the most able and fortunate captain before your time, declared he had lived enough both to nature and to glory; and your grace may make that reflection with much more justice. He spoke it after he had arrived

[311] For example, those given by Harington, Milton and Sydney - see Houston (1991: 157-61).
[312] For example, *Britannia's loss. A poem on the death of England's Caesar* (1702). Not just with respect to Alexander. Elsewhere the theme of Liberty is explored by associating William with Augustus 'Lo Caesar came, and with his conquering sword, Our Laws, Our Lives, And Liberties restor'd.'

> at empire, by an usurpation upon those whom he had enslaved...[313]

Caesar was a usurper and enslaver, but Marlborough's sovereignty (he was made Prince of Mindelheim) 'was the Gift of Him whose Dominions He had preserved'. This was a hero who, rather than rapaciously taking, graciously received his honours and position from the grateful nation he protected. Steele continues, balancing the desire for heroes to achieve the same effect as ancient conquerors with a request to see them exhibit a different cause and comportment:

> How pleasing would it be to hear that the same Man who had carried Fire and Sword into the Countries of all that had opposed the Cause of Liberty, ..., had in the midst of His high Station *Behaviour as gentle* as is usual in the first Steps towards Greatness.[314]

Like the descriptions of Alexander as a destroyer in the previous century, Steele asks for heroes to wield the tools of devastation in foreign lands, but act for the cause of liberty. In a reversal of Addison's conceit when he defined the criteria for induction into the Chamber, 'glory' was 'established upon the uninterrupted Success of *honourable* Designs and Actions'.[315] This kind of success Steele defines as 'not subject to Diminution', a critique of the ephemeral celebration brought by fame that had been the basis for many of Alexander's previous apotheoses.[316]

The Prince Eugene was similarly celebrated for his virtue upon the occasion of his visit to court in January 1712. In addition to his achievements and glory, Steele noted his modesty and integrity in the face of flattery from

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[313] Bond (1965: Vol. 5, pp. 178-80). I am grateful to Hugh Bowden for pointing out the reference to Cic. *Marcell*. 25.

[314] My emphasis. Bond (1965: Vol. 5, pp. 179). This dedication was made while Marlborough was in disgrace and removed from office. Addison was also a passionate supporter of Churchill, composing *The Campaign* (1704) in honour of his victory at Blenheim.

[315] Bond (1965: Vol. 5, pp. 179).

[316] The Duke was excluded under the rubric that no persons who had lived in the last hundred years were to be proposed - Bond (1987: vol. 2, no. 81: pp. 13-21). This dedication may well have been a claim for Marlborough's induction into any list proposed upon the first criteria: that of the truly 'immortal' Soul.

the court. Combining the talents of Alexander and Caesar serves to create the model hero, a point made through recourse to a miniature *syncrisis* of Plutarch's arrangement of lives:

> If this Hero [Eugene] has the strong Incentives to uncommon Enterprizes that were remarkable in *Alexander,* he prosecutes and enjoys the Fame of them with the Justness, Propriety, and good Sense of *Caesar*.[317]

It was the state of mind of this 'hero' that was the distinguishing symptom of his worth. His 'propriety' receives the most admiration, and Steele is genuinely surprised (and delighted), given the prince's reputation and obvious endowments in military matters, that he comports himself so humbly.[318] Eugene, it is claimed, would not succumb to the notion that being popular was a sure distinguishing characteristic of heroism. His lack of desire to court fame showed Steele that he looked beyond public acclaim and towards service. He argued that a virtuous man

> ought to think no Man valuable but for his publick Spirit, Justice, and Integrity; and all other endowments to be esteemed only as they contribute to the exerting those Virtues.[319]

Courage, ambition, prudence and wisdom – the virtues of Caesar and Alexander – were worthless, unless they served the common good. Martial valour was an instrument only to be used in defence of liberty. Alexander's

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[317] Bond (1965: Vol. 3, n. 340, pp. 262-5).

[318] Bond (1965: Vol. 3, n. 340, pp. 262-5). He notes that 'it is easy to observe in him a Mind ready for great Exploits, but not impatient for Occasions to exert itself. The Prince has Wisdom and Valour in as high perfection as Man can enjoy it; which noble Faculties in conjunction, banish all Vain-Glory, Ostentation, Ambition, and all other Vices which might intrude upon his mind to make it unequal.' Plutarch's template offered a choice of the best characteristics from which to fashion their type of hybrid hero. Similarly, Pope's (1715) criticism of Alexander had allowed preference for Caesar's virtues to be displayed: 'And his horn'd head bely'd the Libyan God. There Caesar, grac'd with both Minerva's, shone; Caesar, the world's great master, and his own;' The last couplet contrasts the two most famous protagonists of the ancient world to provide an efficient critique of the 'Youth'. Unlike Caesar, he failed to master himself. To Caesar were given both aspects of Minerva - the goddess of war *and* wisdom – both praising Caesar and stripping Alexander of the latter.

[319] Bond (1965: Vol. 3, n. 340, pp. 262-5).

greatest assets were no longer innately something to be celebrated.[320] In Steele's estimation, Eugene's republican attributes made him 'a hero who never was equalled but by one man', not any ancient conqueror, but Marlborough himself.[321] Thanks to their comportment and aims, these heroes were elevated *pari passu* above all other paradigms. Livy had once had Scipio - the hero of the republic - placed as a hero above Alexander, these contemporary heroes had now exceeded antiquity's most illustrious pairing.

The preference for such heroes was not just a trend limited to Temple's acolytes. A piece by Richard Blackmore (1654–1729), a bitter adversary of Addison and Steele in print, made a case for adequate comparison of Marlborough, espousing similar virtues. His martial achievements had him characterised as Aeneas rather than Achilles; the latter's rage was not seen to be present in Marlborough, but Aeneas' generous spirit was. The Trojan's pious rescue of his father was a more apt analogy for the service conducted by a general to his republic:

> Did the good Trojan bear his aged sire,
> On his strong Shoulders from the raging Fire;
> Marlbro' on his, sustains a noble weight,
> His kindred's, Country's and Europa's Fate.[322]

Blackmore reveals that Marlborough's closest comparator is actually Constantine, since both combine the demeanour of both conqueror *and* judge.[323]

In the 1720s, after fall from favour and death, Marlborough still held a fascination for literati looking for models of achievement. The writer and later politician, George Lyttelton (1709-1773) composed *Bleinheim* (1727) in celebration of the Duke's defining victory and the eponymous palace that

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[320] A claim made by Algernon Sydney - see Houston (1991: 161).
[321] Bond (1965: Vol. 3, n. 340, pp. 262-5).
[322] Blackmore 1718a: 22. For other praise of Marlborough see Blackmore 1718b.
[323] Blackmore 1718: 25. This was underpinned by a respect for his fellow men: 'The Piety and Love to Human Kind / Which fill'd, great Constantine, thy generous mind / Are the same Vertues we in Marlbro find.' The only separation was that one gained an empire and the other retained one and Blackmore underlines the importance of men that fought for the protection of humankind and not those who sought with sword to overturn it.

had been his reward.[324] In the poem he was cast as a liberator sent 'to fight the cause; of Liberty and Justice'.[325] This enabled him to put to shame his illustrious predecessors:

> [On viewing of the palace] – Blush, Caesar, blush
> When thou behold'st these towers; ingrate, to thee
> A monument of shame![326]

Caesar's humbling was due to his seizure of power; Marlborough, had *laid down* his office and army, and received Blenheim plus an annuity as a reward from a grateful nation. In his description of the palace, the interior is interpreted as a monument to the preference for certain heroes of martial excellence. Roving the palace he espies two series of tapestries:

> Here Ister rolls
> His purple wave; and there the Granick flood
> With passing squadrons foam: here hardy Gaul
> Flies from the sword of Britain; there to Greece
> Effeminate Persia yields. – In arms oppos'd,
> Marlborough and Alexander vie for fame
> With glorious competition; equal both
> In valour and in fortune: but their praise
> Be different, for with different view they fought;
> This to subdue, and that to free mankind.[327]

The battles of the Ister (Danube or Blenheim) and Alexander's first major victory against the Persians at Granicus serve to match the victors on the basis of their fame, albeit with emphasis on the inferior quality of the opponents of the former.[328] Alexander and Caesar are sundered irrevocably

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[324] Lyttelton 1801.
[325] Lyttelton 1801: 27. His cause is described thus: 'when Europe freed, confess'd the saving power; Of Marlborough's hand; Britain, who sent him forth; Chief of confederate hosts, to fight the cause; Of Liberty and Justice, grateful rais'd; This palace, sacred to her leader's fame.'
[326] Lyttelton 1801: 28.
[327] Lyttelton 1801: 28-9.
[328] For a comparison of scale, see also an anonymous poem which amongst other themes exploring the achievements of contemporary Britains compares Blenheim to various battles in antiquity done 'For the Defense, and Liberty of *Christendom.*' – *Alcander (*1709:7).

from Marlborough's particular glory by the aims and ends of their conquests. Marlborough's victory was a strike against the spread of absolute government, a victory for freedom; Alexander's campaigns were the ambitions of an enslaver.

Just as the previous section noted that the heroic Alexander remained a figure of pomp and celebration in opera, it is worth highlighting the potential dissonance between works in the public domain and the private estimation of worthy heroes. The Alexander tapestry described in Lyttelton's poem was one of eight commissioned for the Duke's new home.[329] Five were based upon the paintings of Charles Le Brun (created between 1661 and 1668) and *Le Passage de la Riviere Granicus* was among the first to be ordered.[330] As the originals were famously commissioned for Louis' palace in Versailles, not only were they closely associated with Marlborough's enemy, but their situation in the bedchamber and private drawing room suggests a personal attachment of the Duke to the works.[331] The Duke's letters indicate his anticipation of being able to enjoy them with his wife in quiet contemplation. Bapasola suggests that by appropriating Louis' idol, the Duke was claiming the victory made himself 'more worthy of comparison to Alexander'.[332] This supposition hints at variance between the personal celebration of victories in private and the rhetoric of liberty described by Marlborough's admirers in public. The private tastes of the Duke illustrate Alexander as figure of conquest was far from taboo, but in the absence of a closer study, firmer conclusions cannot be made.[333]

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[329] They were delivered in February 1709 then a further four arrive in November 1710 - Bapasola (2005: 11, 41).

[330] See Hartle 1957: 90. These works were not only widely circulated in Europe, but heavily controlled by the artist who had been granted special proprietary rights over the images.

[331] Bapasola 2005: 42-50; 54..

[332] Bapasola 2005: 41. Certainly the location suggests a personal association with the works, as does the symmetrical placing of later commissions commemorating the Duke's victories in the Wars against the French in the *reception* rooms of the house. For his later commission including the *Victories* series see Baposola (2005: 51-82).

[333] Any future study of this sort might draw upon evidence of reading choices, commonplace books and other artistic preferences.

The political writer, magistrate and novelist Henry Fielding (1707–1754) continued the trend when he reformulated some of Lyttelton's ideas in the 1730s. *Of True Greatness* was a broader and more abstract consideration of virtue:

> 'Tis strange, while all to Greatness Homage pay,
> So few should know the Goddess they obey.
> That Men should think a thousand Things the same,
> And give contending Images one Name.[334]

His claim that there was chaos in establishing a definition of greatness underlines the dismantling of the previously monolithic form of virtue offered by the mirror to princes model. After declaiming its many false forms, particular scorn is reserved for the comparison between the aims of warriors ancient and new:

> But hadst thou, Alexander, wish'd to prove
> Thy self the real Progeny of Jove,
> Virtue another Path had bid thee find,
> Taught thee to save, and not to slay Mankind.[335]

Building a critique of conquest on the difference between Marlborough and Alexander, Fielding argued that destruction and murder is not a worthy aim. To aim for divinity, as Alexander once did, one must espouse the nobler cause, epitomised by John Churchill:

> Not on such Wings, to Fame did *Churchill* soar,
> For *Europe* while defensive Arms he bore.
> Whose Conquests, cheap at all the Blood they cost,
> Sav'd Millions by each noble Life they lost.[336]

The price of Alexander's fame was measured in victims, while Marlborough saved more than were sacrificed. Similarly, in an echo of Lyttelton's

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[334] Fielding 1741: 19. Lyttelton was Fielding's patron. See Mcrea (1981: 28) on the connection between Fielding's father and Marlborough. The exact date of composition is unknown.
[335] Fielding 1741: 21.
[336] Fielding 1741: 23.

formulation, '*Caesar*, viewing thee [Marlborough], asham'd withdraws, and owns thee Greater in a greater Cause'.[337] This was the pursuit of 'Liberty' for Britain and Europe, the protection of which amounted to the only justifiable conquest.[338]

Amidst past heroes and foreign monarchs of dubious repute, praise for British heroes had to be adept. Alexander, however, provided a satisfying comparison that allowed writers to match their heroes with a martially successful ancient paradigm, yet surpass him due to their republican values. Weinbrot describes a 'confidence' apparent in British writers, who saw earlier works as great but improvable. Given the noticeable dissonance between the values of Alexander and of the Augustan age, improvement was certainly the prerogative of the authors considered above. This confidence found a useful vehicle in the open-ended Plutarchian prototype which accommodated the desire to define distinctly British heroes.[339] The task of extolling martial triumphs while avoiding the negative aspects of his repute had been difficult when William was compared to Alexander in the 1690s.[340] By the time of Lyttelton, there was clear water between Marlborough and his predecessor. Once mere imitators, British heroes now could surpass him due to the criterion of civic utility. Henry Fielding may have later complained about the ill-defined conclusions made on the topic more generally, but the criticisms levelled at Alexander as a model of virtue were generally agreed (at least in public). When defining England and, after 1707, embodying Britannia, the preservation of liberty and the constitution was the first rank of virtue, with Cato, Cicero and other opponents of Caesar as its heroes. Regarding martial virtue, the selflessness of an Epaminondas stood out favourably, but, excepting the Theban, the morality of these pieces is set firmly away from the modes of ancient heroes. There was a clear bifurcation

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[337] Fielding 1741: 23.
[338] The sentiment was hardly surprising given that Fielding's father had served with Marlborough at Blenheim.
[339] Weinbrot (1993: 3) notes a search for British winners or 'different kinds of victors.'
[340] See Chapter 1.4.

of conquest between fighting to destroy and aggrandise, and fighting to protect polity or liberty. The latter was a statement of contemporary moral progress over ancient martial virtue.[341] Alexander (like Caesar) served to exemplify the "other" of civic virtue and was an obvious foil.

2.3. CONQUEST AND MADNESS

> But hadst thou, Alexander, wish'd to prove
> Thy self the real Progeny of Jove,
> Virtue another Path had bid thee find,
> Taught thee to save, and not to slay Mankind.[342]

The test of utility sought to limit martial figures to protecting liberty. Yet *comparatio* tacitly reiterated Alexander's position as a model. The descriptions of virtue diminished an antiquated hero, but did not destroy his sort of martial virtue. Fielding's condemnation of his slaughter indicated that a case could be constructed to show that destructive acts committed against mankind could not be considered virtuous, heroic or great at all. One line of argument posited that the active abuse of mankind by conquerors was morally intolerable. Henry Fielding developed this moral criticism to create Alexander as the archetype of unnatural, criminal ambition for conquest.

His case against Alexander was indebted to the Roman Alexander. On the acceptance of Corinthian citizenship, Seneca pointed out the differences between the conqueror of Asia and Greece, and Hercules who had received a similar honour:

> For what similarity to him had that mad young man (*vesanus adulescens*) who in place of virtue was simply fortunate in his rashness? Hercules conquered nothing for himself; he travelled across the world not in a spirit of greed, but of judgement as to what he ought to conquer. He was an enemy of the wicked, defender of the good, peacemaker on land and sea. But this other man was, from his boyhood, a robber and despoiler of nations

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[341] It also served to split Britain from its continental enemies, a topic considered in the following chapter.
[342] Fielding 1741: 21.

> (*latro gentiumque vastator*), destructive equally to his enemies and to his friends. He drew his greatest pleasure from terrorising all mankind (*terrori esse cunctis mortalibus*), forgetting that it's not just the most ferocious but also the most cowardly creatures that are feared on account of their poisonous venom.[343]

Alexander was a figure driven to undertake destructive conquests that are equated to brigandage: only a mad man would contemplate such acts.[344] Similarly, Curtius had Scythian envoys chastise Alexander for the hypocrisy of calling them robbers.[345] Lucan noted the same madness as Seneca, as evidenced by his destruction wrought against mankind:

> He rushed through the peoples of Asia, mowing down mankind; he drove his sword home in the breast of every nation; he defiled distant rivers...he was a pestilence to earth, a thunderbolt that struck all peoples alike, a comet of disaster to mankind...nature alone was able to bring his mad reign to this end...[346]

A few examples from the late seventeenth century show how the same trifecta – madness, destruction and conquest - constituted the argument against ancient heroes. Where the Book of Daniel engendered the sense that Alexander's destructive acts were ultimately instrumental, and in concert with providence (see, for example, Samuel Clarke in Chapter 1.1), the act of conquest as seen by John Milton in *Paradise Lost* (1667) was intrinsically against godly virtues:

> Such were these giants, men of high renown;
> For in those days might only shall be admired,
> And valour and heroic virtue called;
> To overcome in battle, and subdue
> Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
> Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
> Of human glory; and for glory done

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[343] Sen., *Ben*. 1.13.3; 2.16.1. For analysis in a Roman context and this translation see Spencer (2002: 75-9).
[344] Sen. *Ben*. 1.13.3-14. The French universal historian Charles Rollin later picks up on this idea in his history – see Rollin (1738: 386).
[345] Curt. 7.8.19; see also Cic. *De. Rep.* 3.14 and Aug. *De. Civ. Dei* 4.4.25.
[346] Luc. *Phars.*, 30-41.

> Of triumph, to be styled great conquerors
> Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods;
> Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men.
> Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth;
> And what most merits fame, in silence hid.[347]

Milton argues that destruction was celebrated in terms of virtue and glory in the ancient world. In contrast to these "virtues" based upon 'might' were the silent ones of true fame based upon Christian goodness.[348]

The damaging consequences of Alexander's "loudness" became particularly relevant with the Swedish King Charles XII. At a precociously young age, he won impressive victories against a Danish-Norwegian alliance and then Russia.[349] The parallel with Alexander was widespread in coffee-houses, political circles and was often repeated in print, for example, in *The Tale of a Tub* (1704). Here Jonathan Swift argued that the desires of Charles and Alexander's achievements stemmed from a common cause: they were both "Madmen".[350] Charles was an important vector for the transmission of this attack on conquerors, as he refreshed awareness of their modes and effects. Bringing together Milton's apocalyptic model of a conqueror with Swift's two Madmen, Alexander Pope in his *Essay on Man IV* (1704) similarly noted:

> Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed

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[347] Milton *Paradise Lost* 6.688-99.

[348] Milton is intent on drawing out the distinction between Christian heroic virtues (based upon goodness) and the satanic (based upon 'might') - see Steadman (1987). As Min Wild (2004: 281) has noted, Milton's critique echoed long into the enlightenment, Christopher Smart's *persona* Mary Midnight echoes Milton's "divine sarcasm" before commenting that Alexander was "the greatest Scoundrel that ever existed."

[349] Bond (1985: vol. 1. n. 67. p. 468). After noting the occasion of his heel injury causing the proliferation of comparisons to Achilles, Steele noted a personal bugbear: 'we do likewise forbid all Comparisons in Coffee-houses between Alexander the Great and said King of Sweden, and from making any parallels between the Death of Patkul and Philotas; we being very apprehensive of the Reflections that several Politicians have ready by them to produce on this Occasion, and being willing, as much as in us lies, to free the Town from all Impertinencies of this nature.' Patkul was a Livonian nobleman who had sided with Russia against Charles and, following his surrender, had been put to death. His weary request demonstrates the extent to which the comparison had become a cliché in certain circles in London.

[350] Swift (1704: 16.9).

> From Macedonia's madman to the Swede;
> The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find
> Or make, an enemy of all mankind![351]

Although both Swift and Pope were avowed supporters of the "ancients", a selfishness and tendency to human slaughter meant that Alexander, Achilles and Aeneas were morally problematic heroes. Levine notes that Pope saw that 'the world had mended its manners since the days of heroic simplicity in such things as 'putting whole nations to the sword, condemning Kings and their families to perpetual slavery, and a few others'.[352]

Similarly influenced by his recent translation of Gustavus Adlerfeld's *Military History of Charles XII* (1740), in *The History of the Life of Jonathan Wild the Great (*1743), Henry Fielding constructed a detailed argument against Alexander as a hero.[353] Fielding's work retold the life of a famed thief-taker and gangland boss of some recent celebrity (not least for his public execution), whose biography had been written a decade earlier.[354] Fielding's work did not purport to accurately represent his life, but drew upon Wild and Alexander to sustain an allegory. The work was a specific attack upon the politics of the Whig dominated administration of the previous two decades. Under his patron George Lyttelton, Fielding was a critic in the 1730s of the dominant ministry of Sir Robert Walpole. He used his later works to definitively side with the "Broad-bottoms" as one of many literary critics,

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[351] Pope *Essay on Man* 4.219-22.
[352] Pope *Poems* 10:392-7, quoted in Levine (1984: 40).
[353] See Fielding 2003: xxii – xxiii. His library records show that he had also read Voltaire's *History of Charles XII* (1731). Fielding notes of Wild: "He was a passionate admirer of heroes, particularly of Alexander the Great, between whom and the late king of Sweden he would frequently draw parallels. He was much delighted with the accounts of the Czar's retreat from the latter, who carried off the inhabitants of great cities to people his own country. THIS, he said, WAS NOT ONCE THOUGHT OF BY Alexander; BUT added, PERHAPS HE DID NOT WANT THEM." Charles Rollin's history was translated from 1734 onwards and also makes note of how Charles was reminiscent of Alexander: 'We, ourselves, have seen a famous * [here he footnotes Charles XII, King of Sweden] conqueror, who boasted his treading in the steps of Alexander, carry further than he had ever done this kind of savage-heroism; and lay it down as a maxim to himself, never to recede from his resolution.' – Rollin 1738: 219.
[354] Although *Of True Greatness* appeared in the same collection of Miscellanies in 1743, it had been previously printed in 1741 with the note that it had been written 'several' years earlier. See Fielding (1743: 19).

united against the perceived danger inherent in the "narrow" web of patronage, place holders and sinecures operated by Walpole.[355] Using the term "Great Man" to describe Wild he made a thinly veiled allusion to Walpole, since this was a widely acknowledged sobriquet for the "Prime Minister".[356] Although Caesar was also cited, Alexander was presented as Wild's inspirational hero and provided the intersection via which the "virtues" of ancient conquerors and criminals could be attached to his target.

To make this attack on Walpole, Fielding equated the Stoic-Miltonic view of ancient virtue - espoused by heroes or "Great Men" – to criminality. His literary influences were John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) and *Polly* (published by subscription in 1729) which had similarly struck at the government by naming a highwayman a 'great man', and making the surrounding criminal sub-society the subject of an opera. Criminals and their actions were equated to people of higher classes to imply that the politicians who scheme and rob were as much criminal as those who are hanged for crimes at lower levels of society. This exposed the basic hypocrisy of letting political elites get away with actions that would be harshly punished if committed by those society considered base.[357] With a gangster-thief as the novel's protagonist, Fielding made a similar connection between the modes of the 'prig' and the 'Great Man'.[358] The difference between the two was only a matter of scale, a point expressed in the words of Wild:

> Of those who employ Hands for their own Use only: And this is the noble and Great part, who are generally distinguished into *Conquerors, absolute Princes, Prime Ministers*, and *Prigs*. Now all

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[355] Political opposition to Walpole had of course a much longer history with Viscount Lord Henry St John Bolingbroke leading it from *The Craftsman* from 1725-1735.

[356] To refer to Walpole as a great man was by the 1730s was commonplace. See Cleary (1986: 1) for his relationship with Lyttelton and others.

[357] This argument is summarised by Davidson (2007: 68). Fielding consistently distinguishes between those that seize their fortune from open rapacity (the Alexanders) and those that use intrigue to prosper (i.e. those at court). Other common themes include the ruin of great men by women (presumably after *The Rival Queens* and *Alessandro*) and the exclusive nature of ambition that created a "false" version of virtue.

[358] For the broad thesis of *Jonathan Wild* mounting both an abstract moral, and narrow political, satirical attack, see Cleary (1986:198).

> these differ from each other in Greatness only, as they employ *more*, or *fewer* Hands. And *Alexander* the Great was only *greater* than a Captain of one of the *Tartarian* or *Arabian Hords,* as he was at the Head of a greater Number. In what then is a single *Prig* inferior to any other Great Man...[359]

Wild claimed his criminal actions were the same as those of the (perceived) higher station. By establishing greatness as a property unified by independent agency rather than virtue, Fielding united the great with the criminal. Continuing to praise his own virtues as a thief, Wild then argues that those virtues that "qualify a man for eminence in a low sphere, qualify him likewise for eminence in a higher, sure it can be no doubt in which he would chuse to exert them".[360] Fielding stripped any respectable veneer from Walpole's prime minster and Alexander's great conqueror; the difference was only social positioning. In an attack using the trope of Alexander's celebrated attribute, Wild comments that "ambition, without which no one can be a great man, will immediately instruct him,..., to prefer a hill in Paradise to a dunghill."[361] Ambition was not to be considered a distinguishing virtue of the great, but a sensible preference for one's surrounds. *Wild* attacked Walpole's political tactics by drawing parallels between his exploitation of government power and common criminality (murder, betrayal, extortion, selfishness) of which Wild and Alexander were the prominent examples. The former added notoriety and baseness. The latter offered a man whose veneer of greatness had been peeled away, an exposure of the kind Fielding was attempting to do to Walpole.

In the case of Alexander this exposure concerned his lack of civic utility. It was achieved through showing that the methods of conquerors, prigs and

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[359] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.14 (Fielding 2003: 44). Presumably based upon the anecdote given by Curt. 7.8.19, Cic. *De. Rep.* 3.14 and repeated in Aug., *De civ. dei* 4.4.
[360] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.6 (Fielding 2003: 20).
[361] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.6 (Fielding 2003: 20). He continues "Nay, even fear, a passion the most repugnant to greatness, will shew him how much more safely he may indulge himself in the free and full exertion of his mighty abilities in the higher than in the lower rank; since experience teaches him that there is a crowd oftener in one year at Tyburn than on Tower-hill in a century."

prime ministers were clearly anathema to mankind in general. The famous anecdote in which Alexander was distraught at there being no more worlds to conquer is used to describe conquest as compulsive annihilation, and illustrated the dreadful selfishness of conquerors in a return to the theme of Milton, Seneca and Fielding's own *Of Heroic Greatness*.[362] Fixing on the 'summit' of their goals, these men ignored the cost of their methods. Instead, the use and abuse of lesser 'humble' mortals was apparent:

> but when I behold one GREAT MAN starving with hunger and freezing with cold, in the midst of fifty thousand who are suffering the same evils for his diversion; when I see another, whose own mind is a more abject slave to his own greatness, and is more tortured and racked by it, than those of all his vassals; lastly, when I consider whole nations rooted out only to bring tears into the eyes of a GREAT MAN, not indeed because he hath extirpated so many, but because he had no more nations to extirpate, then truly I am almost inclined to wish that Nature had spared us this her MASTERPIECE, and that no GREAT MAN had ever been born into the world.[363]

The three Great Men were Charles, Caesar and Alexander respectively.[364] Alexander's cry for further glory is mirrored by Wild's own experience when facing execution. He muses that 'I ought rather to weep, with Alexander, that I have ruined no more, than to regret the little I have done.'[365]

The novel further mocked the premise of finding virtue in the lives of such Great Men. A clear link to Plutarch's was created by a series of prophetic events – for example, the great plague of 1665 - to mark the birth of his protagonist, designed to evoke particularly the beginning of the *Life of*

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[362] Fielding 1741: 22. 'Shall Ravag'd Fields, and burning Towns proclaim, The Hero's Glory not the Robber's Shame? Shall Thousands fall, and Millions be undone, To glut hungry Cruelty of one."

[363] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.14 (Fielding 2003: 43 and 257 n.43). The anecdote of Alexander's tears was widely popular in the eighteenth century, but is not in any of the ancient sources. It probably is a corruption of Plut. *De. Tranq. Anim.* 4.

[364] See Fielding (2003: 256-7) for the details of each event.

[365] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 4.5 (Fielding 2003: 137). See also *Of Heroic Glory* (1741: 22). Rawson (1972:154) uses the term 'brutal gangster-conqueror' which is colourful but not supported by any particular references. His place as an immoral conqueror is sound given the examples above.

Alexander.[366] Although a central theme is that historians have lauded morally bankrupt figures, the target of the attack was not Plutarch himself (he was merely gently mocked). It was the ancient figures he described and, more importantly, the continued clamour for them in contemporary society.[367] In the events of Wild's life there was little similitude intended with the conqueror of Asia and the format owed little to Plutarch. Instead, after establishing the connection in the opening, the attack is clearly against Alexander through Wild's constant allusions to Alexander his hero. A further critique of the morality lying behind the contemporary genre of biography is sustained through the heightened ironic treatment of characteristics pertaining to criminality in terms usually reserved for the heroic.[368] Criminal acts - for instance, larceny and greed - are inverted to become "great". Wild's ablest lieutenant Fireblood (he is both described as, and his name is a play on, Hephaestion) is depicted as lacking humanity, modesty and fear, and is therefore a perfect assistant to a great man.[369] Fielding also uses attributes usually ascribed to Alexander – 'the truest Mark of Greatness is Insatiability' – in the context of Wild's achievements (his relentless pursuit of other people's money) to expose their dubious virtue.[370] Alexander's ambition is stripped down to its bare self-interest, as Fielding exposes the absurdity of society's applause for "Great Men".

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[366] As opposed to the burning of the temple that coincides with Alexander's birth (Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 3.3). Farrell 1966 explores the genre of *Jonathan Wild* in detail, but despite a convincing case demurs from making a conclusive argument for the *Vitae Alexandri* as a prominent model for Fielding's work. For a full comparison see Farrell 1966: 222-3 which matches the taming of Bucephalus with Wild's school days and the comparative list of favourite books – Plut. *Vit. Alex*. 2-8. One thing not mentioned by Farrell is the clear Plutarchian constitution given for Wild in the introduction – *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.6 (Fielding 2003: 20).

[367] Davidson (2007: 66) picks up on the tongue in cheek nature of the Plutarchian intro.

[368] Fielding's target was not so much the form but the moral code. The mock heroic of Pope's *Rape of the Lock* or *Dunciad* satirised the ancient turn, but Fielding could use such an obviously "bad" conqueror in Alexander to make a direct attack on the immorality of ancient heroic virtue, while preserving primacy of the epic form of Homer or Virgil.

[369] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 3.2 (Fielding 2003: 87, 272 n.93). Farrell (1966: 223) calls these vignettes a 'gallery of pictures.' In contrast, Fielding's preference for the tenderness and humanity of Wild's victim *Heartfree* is drawn through ironical criticism of his lack of 'greatness sufficient to conquer' such traits.

[370] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 2.2 (Fielding 2003: 52) for insatiability and greatness.

Echoing Milton's separation of satanic and godly virtue, Fielding's specific moral point is to untangle the notion of "good" from that of "great". In order to demonstrate the muddled thinking that moralists and biographers had regarding these two concepts, as narrator he introduces his subject: 'confound the Ideas of Greatness and Goodness. For Greatness consists in bringing all Manner of Mischief on Mankind, and Goodness in removing it from them'.[371] Fielding does this with an attack on the way in which writers will mark their narrative of the 'Great' actions of a hero's life with those that are good:

> Now, tho' the Writer, if he will confine himself to Truth, is obliged to draw a perfect Picture of the former [the great] in all the Actions which he records of his Hero, yet to reconcile his work with those absurd doctrines above-mentioned, he is ever guilty of interspersing Reflections in Reality to the disadvantage of that Great Perfection, Uniformity of character.[372]

Fielding ironically chides the writer for spoiling their portrait of Greatness by mentioning truly good acts. His example focuses upon one of Alexander's most famous acts of chivalry:

> for Instance, in the Histories of *Alexander* and *Caesar*, we are frequently reminded of their Benevolence and Generosity. When the former had with fire and sword overrun a vast empire, had destroyed the lives of an immense number of innocent wretches, had scattered ruin and desolation like a whirlwind, we are told, as an example of his clemency, that he did not cut the throat of an old woman, and ravish her daughters, but was content with only undoing them.[373]

As Davidson argues, Fielding wanted to show that the compartmentalised treatment of vignettes of virtue were an absurd defence of a conqueror

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[371] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.2 (Fielding 2003: 8).
[372] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.2 (Fielding 2003: 8).
[373] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.2 (Fielding 2003: 8).

whose very purpose - to extirpate - was immoral.[374] This drew completely disproportionate praise upon an otherwise loathsome "Great" subject. Fielding wanted Alexander's most celebrated anecdote of virtue to seem crass in the context of his greater crimes. Similarly, his magnanimity and clemency in the wake of victory – demonstrated by the return to Porus of *his own* kingdom - is parodied continuously when Wild strips his victims of money before giving back, unbeknownst to them, their own money in the form of loans or bail money.[375]

The example of Wild allowed Fielding to render a character so extremely "Great" as to expose the equivocation that often clouded the reader's view of the turpitude of ancient heroism:

> Nor had he [Wild] any of those Flaws in Character, which, though they have been commended by weak Writers, have by the judicious Reader been censured and despised. Such is the Clemency of *Alexander* and *Caesar*...[376]

Writers should stick to showing the "great" as consistently "great". Fielding's portrait of Wild pointedly eschewed such "moral lapses" (to be read as true virtues), to show the main character for exactly what he is – a Great man in *all* of his actions, lacking any "weakness" (to be read as redeeming features). By showing Wild as a paragon of virtue in such a bombastic manner - 'truly great, almost without Alloy' – Fielding argues that the Great Man should no longer be hidden by the window dressing of this or that good act.[377] This inversion mocked not just Alexander's eulogists, but

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[374] Davidson 2008: 67. See also Wild (2004: 281), who notes the "tenuous nature of excuses" for Alexander.

[375] For example, his treatment of Mr Bagshot, *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 2.2 (Fielding 2003: 50).

[376] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 4.16 (Fielding 2003: 179). See also the opening - *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 1.2 (2003: 8): 'and yet nothing is more usual with writers, who find many instances of greatness in their favourite hero, than to make him a compliment of goodness into the bargain; and this, without considering that by such means they destroy the great perfection called uniformity of character. In the histories of Alexander and Caesar we are frequently, and indeed impertinently, reminded of their benevolence and generosity, of their clemency and kindness.'

[377] *The Life of Mr Jonathan Wild the Great* 14.16 (Fielding 2003: 180).

those that would credit him with some virtue despite his obvious crimes. Richard King has argued that Handel's Alexander was 'a lesson in the proper behaviour of men', for the opera crowd in the 1720s.[378] In starkly weighing the misery of the many as opposed to the satisfaction of one, Fielding struck against any idealising such a model:

> Now as to that greatness which is totally devoid of goodness, it seems to me in nature to resemble the false sublime in poetry whose bombast is, by the ignorant and ill-judging vulgar, often mistaken for solid wit and eloquence...This bombast greatness then is the character I intend to expose.[379]

Opera or the portraits of Le Brun and Paolo Veronese had found Alexander's pomp so fruitful, but they were here accused of obfuscating his moral bankruptcy. Making the basic function of his existence criminal meant even a taste of his 'goodness' was a crass reminder of the depravity of ancient heroism.

What use were these heroes? Elsewhere Fielding attacked the notion that fame was a valid guiding passion: he asked, 'the greatest, highest, noblest, finest, most heroic and godlike of all Passions, what doth it end in?'[380] When Fielding reconstructed the famous meeting between Diogenes and the king of Macedon, a clear answer was provided.[381] Fielding's Diogenes begins his mockery of Alexander by portraying his fame as shameful since it is based upon his conquest of nations.[382] Alexander defends himself on the basis that

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[378] King 1996: 55.
[379] From his preface to the *Miscellanies* in which *Jonathan Wild* was collected - Fielding (1973: 11-12).
[380] From *An Essay on Nothing* - Fielding (1973: 188-9).
[381] *Dialogue between Alexander and Diogenes* (1745) in Fielding (1973: 226-35). In a recreation of the incident widely described, the most repeated aspect of which is the request from Diogenes for the king to step out of his sunlight. The major accounts are: Cic., *Tusc.* 5. 32; Val. Max., 4. 3. Ext. 4; Dio. Chrys., *Fourth Discourse*; Plut., *Vit. Alex.*, xiv; Arr., *Anab.,* 7.2- 1-2; and Diog. Laert., 4.32, 38, 60, 68.
[382] Fielding 1972 :226-7. For a more sober and less polemical imagining of this meeting, see *Diogenes the Cynick, to Alexander the Great, reproaching his ambitious Proceedings* (1751: 323). Diogenes points out his own happiness with his (poor) lot and Alexander's hubris - 'neither earth nor sea being able to satisfy you, your next expedition must be against heaven, which, how heinous an offence that is to attempt, Homer has described to you at large.' See, Sen. *Ben.,* 5.4. Diogenes then twists his offer of a kingdom, to quip that Alexander can only, 'if I

acclaim was a reward he considered suitable for his achievements: 'for in what doth all Honour, Glory, and Fame consist, but in the Breath of that Multitude, whose Estimation with such ill-grounded Scorn thou dost affect to despise'. Alexander's "evidence" for such a claim served to damn his own enterprise; why else, he asks in bemusement, would someone have 'invaded and spoiled the Cities and Territories of others', and eschewed 'the Prospect of any other Good' but for 'this adoration of Slaves'. Having read *Jonathan Wild,* one was already primed for the hollow resonance of this claim and Diogenes dismisses it: 'Thy own words have convinced me, (stand a little more out of the Sun, if you please) that thou hast not the least Idea of true Honour.'[383] In similar terms, Richard Blackmore had attacked the idea of fame as an end not worthy of the pursuit:

> By what strong Impulse anxious Mortals strive,
> That their own Fun'rals they may long survive?
> Charm'd with its Splendor, all at Glory aim,
> And ardent climb the tempting Heights of Fame.
> Behold for this imaginary Good,
> Intrepid Warriors wade thro' Seas of Blood.

Fame's illusive value caused many to undertake feats of dubious moral worth and of little tangible legacy.[384] For true immortality, Blackmore wanted non-'foolish' men to aim for true virtue instead of ambition:

> While foolish men, with vain Ambition cry
> To live in Sound and Names, that never die;
> Exalted Minds should Toil superior bear,
> More Hazards run, and warmer Zeal declare,
> Whose gen'rous Thoughts inspir'd by Virtue aim
> At Blissful Life, and true Immortal Fame.[385]

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had one, take it from me; and I shall never place any Value on that which such as thou art can deprive me of.'

[383] Fielding 1972: 229. Here he quotes the famous anecdote of the sun which is in most of the major accounts, see n.371.

[384] In an image reminiscent of Hamlet's observation that even great men like Alexander can end up as dust (see chapter 0.4).

[385] Blackmore 1718: 306-307. *On Fame* was first printed in 1714.

Both these works used Milton's critique, not just as a strike against Alexander, but also against the very premise of the various *atria* of fame constructed in the early-century. They were an exercise in empty vanity and outdated virtue. Alexander and Caesar were made archetypical members of an ambitious plundering and massacring 'heroic band'. To Fielding and Blackmore the sum of their achievement – their very fame - was ultimately 'nothing'.[386]

In *Jonathan Wild* Alexander's repute was at its nadir. The difference between Fielding's work and those of his predecessors was that it lacked any pretence of respect towards his ancient subject. The factionalism inherent in the critique of Walpole lent urgency and encouraged the adoption of an extreme position – an ingredient particular to an overtly political tract as it had been in Lee's *The Rival Queens*. Aside from his politicisation, the role of contemporary Alexanders in pushing his paradigm away from models of British virtue is also significant. As Brauer has argued, the Stuarts established the constitutional dangers posed by tyrannical kings; Charles of Sweden had exemplified the critique of conquest given by Milton.[387] Through applying Alexander's paradigm to a politician with little ostensive similarity to the conqueror of Asia, Fielding attacked the fundamental aspect of his bellicosity. In comparison to his place in Restoration politics, Alexander was no longer a particularly close analogy for the issues of monarchy and constitution, but he still had enough relevance to allow Fielding to suggest a blunt analogy between criminal conquest and criminal actions in politics. Yet Addison and others were reluctant to entirely severe the ancient heroes from modern examples, despite using the same moral mandate as Blackmore and Fielding. Fielding's *Wild* also hints that there were *many* lingering glances to the heroic imaginary of the sort seen in opera and at Blenheim. This study is not an attempt to gauge which view was exceptional or commonplace, but Fielding's exasperated tone perhaps illustrates that there was persistent

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[386] *An Essay on Nothing* Fielding (1743: 188-9).
[387] Brauer 1980: 36-8.

popular nostalgia for Alexander's brand of heroism regardless of his morality.

2.4. AFTERWORD

In the decades following, the reaction to two assessments of Alexander written outside of England in the same vein as those of the pre-Restoration era, offer some proof of this final point. The first, by Christina, formerly Queen of Sweden (1626-89), had been written more than sixty years previously, but was only translated into English in 1753. It was unashamedly apologist in places and, although Alexander does not escape censure, the resulting portrait is a man to whom, she notes, '[in] our times none hath been equal to him.' She compared the greatness of his deeds in so short a life to 'a flash of lightning, but such a lightning dazzled all ages'.[388] The translator saw fit to publish for:

> The dress [the prose style] is indeed negligent, but the stuff is rich and chosen with taste; 'tis the adjustment that is careless; and to speak the truth, it is careless almost without example. But the noble thoughts of the queen, and the great genius, shines throughout.[389]

Although agreeing that the work should be (faintly) praised for its 'sprightly animated manner, and [..] a stile not altogether unequal to the dignity of the subject', one reviewer was scathing. He notes that 'judgement was not the talent of the princess' and his grounds for objection are that both Christina and her subject

> have egregiously mistaken the notion of true glory; which surely does not spring from the slaughter and destruction of our fellow creatures; from ruining empires, and involving whole nations in slavery!

[388] Christina of Sweden 1753: 180.
[389] Christina of Sweden 1774: x.

The notion of glory had been recalibrated away from conquest, and could not be based upon the capacity to destroy and conquer. Using the term popularised by Milton and Pope, these were completely immoral, indeed mad, as the reviewer remarks: 'Macedonia's Madman[390] knew no greater delight than this; not fought any higher honours, than those which were only to be acquired by a life spent in rapine and butchery.'[391] Writers such as Christina had sought to atomise Alexander's actions and proffer each anecdote according to their distinct morality, while his achievements withstood incidents of occasional moral slippage. This review argued that this method was anachronistic, since his virtues were fundamentally unconnected to a higher purpose. In a manner similar to Steele's article on Prince Eugene, the review makes a demand for utility as a measure of success: 'where philanthropy and universal benevolence are wanting, courage is only brutality, and *power* a curse upon the earth: the objects of dread and horror, not of esteem and praise.'[392] The impact of latter day imitators of Alexander on this view is clearly profound. The concluding and, what the author presents as, the most convincing evidence for this argument comes from recent history:

> Can the aspiring young princes with an emulation of *Alexander's* character, be deemed a matter of public utility?' Of the fatal effects of this, the world hath seen an unhappy instance, in the history of one of *Christina's* successors, Charles XII *Of Sweden*.[393]

In recent times, the example of Charles demonstrated that this form of glory was obviously deleterious to the 'public utility'. Christina's work was exposed for its supposed naivety in understanding virtue as derived from the values internal to the individual. Steele, Fielding and others had

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[390] Here he acknowledges the phrase taken from Pope.
[391] *Article VI. The works of Christina queen of Sweden* 1753: 35-36.
[392] *Article VI. The works of Christina queen of Sweden* 1753: 36.
[393] *Article VI. The works of Christina queen of Sweden* 1753: 36. The reviewer goes on to speculate on the reasons for Christina choosing such a hero, concluding, somewhat inventively, that it was because of her masculine aspects – in looks and sensibilities. Such a speculative exercise shows the bemusement that attribution of greatness to Alexander could now cause.

established that virtue should target civic utility and that conquest should not destroy lives.

The translation of Prince Frederick Augustus of Brunswick's *Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great* aimed to instruct young aristocrats and appeared in 1767. Brunswick's work was structured anecdotally and praised the traditional set pieces of the Alexander story – such as the treatment of Darius' family – while censuring him for the less savoury vices – such as his 'indolence' after the victory over Darius.[394] Originally in Italian, the unknown English translator echoed Brende and Botero when he presented the work as instructive to the younger reader: '[the work is] admirably calculated to prevent them [the young] from falling into those vices which will render any man contemptible, but cannot fail to make a sovereign really odious.'[395] The underwhelmed acclaim and, patronising praise, of one review implies that the manner of expression was usable for the young, but not 'sufficient in acuteness of penetration' for more mature audiences.[396] The reviewer only clearly commended the sentiments and sense of the Prince, when Brunswick censured Alexander for bewailing that his father Philip would leave nothing for him to conquer.[397] This famous episode was now a jarring model against the true virtue of a prince. One reviewer thought the following passage particularly commendable:

> "But it was not a great mistake to imagine, that the only method for a king to distinguish himself, is to extirpate a part of a human species, to make thousands miserable, and to shed the innocent blood of whole nations? With what abundant reason might the race of men bewail their fate, if all those who are placed upon the

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[394] See, for example, Brunswick (1767: 64 and 112).
[395] Brunswick 1767: 3.
[396] *X. Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great* 1767: 382. The reviewer notes that, '... the work may properly be put in the hands of every young gentleman who has occasion to read the history of *Alexander* in the course of his classical leaning.' A further review - *Article. 22. Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great. Review* (1767: 67) - praises the work's 'piety and good sense' as 'instructive to boys' in sentiment, but not 'sufficient in acuteness of penetration' for the more mature mind.
[397] Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 5.1-2.

> throne should think in the same manner! The whole world would presently be depopulated! A sovereign who hath the slenderest feelings of humanity will always regard war as a misfortune."[398]

The illegality of conquerors is explicit, as is the necessity to be sensitive to the needs of the many when considering war. The primary basis on which a king should be judged was the equanimity of his rule over his people:

> "He may render himself respectable, and acquire a sufficient share of glory by governing his subjects with discretion and equity and conforming his actions to the laws of nature and reason."[399]

In the case of unavoidable war, "he doth nothing but obey the dictates of his duty."[400] Brunswick and the reviewer accepted that the king had the duty of service as given by William Temple.

The reviewer dismisses Brunswick's ambivalence towards Alexander, in particular his accusation that his passion for achievement, demonstrates *at least* his virility when measured against the 'indolence' of the Persian Kings.[401] Indolence is redefined by the reviewer in order to attack Brunswick's misapprehension: 'indolence, properly speaking, is no other than misusing the exercise of our rational faculties and virtuous affections, and suffering ourselves to be carried away by the indulgence of a favourable habit, either natural or acquired.' Failure to control oneself is argued to be indolence, rather than any lack of martial desire. A proxy for this argument was again Charles XII, an example stated with a boldness implying the self-evident power of using an analogy with such raw and memorable potency:

> Charles XII of Sweden, though he lived in an eternal tempest of war, fatigues, and marches, was in this sense the most indolent prince of his time; because he could not put himself to the trouble

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[398] *X. Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great* 1767: 382.
[399] *X. Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great* 1767: 383.
[400] *X. Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great* 1767: 382.
[401] *X. Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great* 1767: 382. Brunswick notes "It was says he, very commendable in Alexander, when he had scarcely outgrown his infancy to be so desirous of distinguishing himself from his contemporary princes, who used to pass away their days in luxury and effeminate softness, after the examples of the king of Persia."

> of correcting that brutal bloody passion for war which he received from nature, and which was confirmed by habit.

Both kings were seen as culpable in their failure to check their passions. The final attack was mounted against Brunswick's comparison between Alexander and Henry, son of James I and Prince of Wales, in praise of his aptitude for martial virtue:

> The liberties of a people, especially of the English, are always endangered by a martial monarch. Foreigners, however, are to be excused as to the ideas they form of the British constitution, which is of itself a study totally dissimilar to any other of the kind, and sometimes very contradictory to the maxims most generally received and established in other countries.[402]

The whiff of a patriotic distaste for tyranny was palpable. The need to put this 'foreigner' straight on such matters was a statement not just of a sentiment against great men presented by Fielding, but the consensus that the English would hold the preservation of 'liberty' as self-evident and assume that a martial monarch would bring tyranny.[403] Disconnecting British values from Alexander was not far from limited to delineating present from the past, civic values were also forged in comparison to other nations. There was no place for a willful, selfish conqueror within the minds of those who supported the 'free' constitution of the British Isles. How British identity was matched to past and present opponents regarding contemporary imperialism is the focus of the next chapter.[404]

2.5. CONCLUSION

Alexander's already questionable model of virtue took a buffeting in the early-seventeenth century. He suffered from the clash between ancients and moderns, an open debate upon heroism, and the strong presumption that martial achievement had very little innate civic value. The examples

[402] *X. Critical Reflections on the Character and Actions of Alexander the Great* 1767: 383.
[403] *The Rival Queens* was being performed regularly until the 1790s and at least in print until 1871 – see Ball (2012: 151-3).
[404] How this was affected by views on empire will be explored in the following chapter.

considered in this chapter were certainly not distributed across all political and ideological backgrounds. Yet in their broad agreement they paint Alexander as "Other" than an accepted model of virtue in post-Glorious revolution civic discourse; he was now a paradigm of false martial achievement and fame.[405] Their use of Alexander exposes the promotion of broadly republican ideas of the polity above the individual, and alludes to the suspicion that aristocratic or monarchic prerogative was not in the national interest. However, there is evidence of a persistent lingering glance towards the ancient world that typifies what Folkenflik calls a period 'hero-haunted by Greek and Roman prowess'.[406]

Brauer has underlined the importance of Nathaniel Lee arguing that *The Rival Queens* 'added force to the anti-Alexander tradition', while he acknowledges the greater intellectual debt later works owed to Temple.[407] Eventually Fielding derived his critique from Temple, Milton and the Stoics when he created the criminal conqueror. It should also be noted that the dangers of despotic monarchy were clearly set out in Lee's work, and Fielding was certainly engaged in a political scene very different from that of the Restoration.[408] To this end, new Alexanders were important in circumscribing Alexander's paradigm. A process that had begun with Lee's fear of James II and Louis XIV, gained traction after Charles of Sweden. This came to its height in the description of Wild-Walpole, which by dint of being the least similar to Alexander, pushed the paradigm the furthest. This chapter further amplifies the role of contemporary Alexanders. The example given by Marlborough joined the negative models in a mutually deleterious effect even on Fielding, who had also praised his achievements long before

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[405] Wild 2004: 283.
[406] Folkenflik 1982: 11-2. At least definitions of heroism eventually had to acknowledge both "a man eminent for bravery" and the much broader "man of the highest class in any respect."
[407] Brauer (1980: 37-8) for his thoughts on the influence of Temple.
[408] Brauer (1980: 47) notes that 'towards the end of the century and into the middle of the eighteenth, he had often been called a criminal conqueror and destroyer.'

he had written on Charles and *Wild*.[409] Marlborough, and to a lesser extent Epaminondas or other ancient republican patriots, elicited confidence that there was a better standard of heroes: to match the destructive conqueror, one now had constructive heroes that fought for liberty. The heroes of civic utility, furthermore, have to be identified as a particular form of the general argument against criminal conquerors. The existential nature of the fight – namely, their service to liberty and preservation of polity - was the foremost concern of Marlborough's cheerleaders. Their celebratory mode was absent from Fielding's *Wild* and other attacks on criminal conquerors.

When Giovanni Botero introduced his topic in 1602, Alexander's vices were open to criticism, but the idea of great conquerors and great men was an unshakeable premise. By the 1760s, not only had the highest peaks of his fame become crass, but the idea of great men, existing only for purposes of martial conquest was an anachronism. The commentators and novelists could still call upon compartmentalised examples for positive instruction, but Alexander's achievements and attributes, conquest and personal ambition, were no longer acceptable currency, to the point that even an exemplar of his *areté* – his treatment of Darius' family - seemed a burlesque of true heroic virtues. The previous chapter demonstrated how well Alexander fitted into the exemplarity model of historical writing. Peter Burke has argued that although the majority of writers and readers saw the ancient world as having absolute relevance to the contemporary world, there was a minority view that the past was 'culturally distinct'.[410] Alexander was an anachronistic citation of the past, which reached apogee in the works of Fielding and stemmed from a critique of his utility. Despite this, the rubric of utility was an important and lasting innovation. It liberated assessments of Alexander from a purely binary choice between describing his virtues and vices, a convention firmly limited to an aristocratic concern with a type of

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[409] See Brauer (1980: 40-1) for the role of Charles and Louis in reminding readers of Alexander and other criminal conquerors.
[410] Burke (2011: 556).

virtue that was being eroded. When situated within the confines of civic responsibility Alexander received little respite from his critics. Yet in different contexts – namely empire - other definitions of utility and political realities were in play. How the "liberated" Alexander would fare is the subject of the following chapter.

3. EMPIRES AND ALEXANDERS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

This chapter will discuss how Alexander fared when British writers conceptualised imperialism from the 1690s to the 1790s. Alexander's lack of civic utility meant that he was not widely celebrated in the early-eighteenth century. The works considered in the previous chapter left no obvious answer to a question posed by the Abbé De Saint-Pierre: 'what great additional happiness did the conquests of Alexander procure, either to the republics of Greece, or to Mankind?'[411] Henry Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* made a strident claim that Alexander "types" actively abused humanity for their own selfish ends. But even as Fielding or De Saint-Pierre cited his military conquests as testament to Alexander's crassness, their exasperation revealed the fascination had not receded. There was little room for Alexanders in British politics or European wars, but writers still tussled with the foremost ancient conqueror as they celebrated the heroes of contemporary empire and conceptualised its methods and aims. As Britain acquired an empire in the regions of the world where Alexander had once conquered, discussions of Alexander's civic virtue had to account for the intellectual challenges of expansion. In stark contrast to his deleterious treatment "at home", the ideologies and experiences of Britain's imperial ventures led to a significant recasting of Alexander's paradigm.

Proponents of "new imperial history" have argued that the values of domestic culture and conceptions of empire were mutually implicated in the construction of Britishness in the eighteenth century. As the previous chapter has demonstrated, Alexander was a lens through which definitions of British values were constructed. His example provides a useful case study on how the British constructed "difference" and "filiation", concepts that made the experience of empire negotiable if often unsettling.[412] This chapter will aim to

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[411] De Saint-Pierre 1726: 260.

[412] See Wilson (2004: 3-4) for an overview of this approach. See also, for example, Armitage (2000) and Nechtman (2010: 4).

complement existing studies of how Alexander functioned as a paradigm for Britain's empire. Pierre Briant has shown how key figures in the Scottish Enlightenment - such as John Gillies and William Robertson – cast Alexander as a visionary and offered him as a model for British rule in India.[413] Aware of the mutual implication of values of nation and the politics of empire, Briant focuses on a situation where empire had provoked a controversy of national character and how historiography provided potential redress for the values and modes of imperial rule.[414] Through maintaining focus on how Alexander informed British heroes and their values across the century, the current chapter will seek to explore a full and more detailed narrative of how identity was negotiated.

Alexander appears as a metonym for empire as a whole, and as a figure for *comparatio* with individuals. The chapter will explore two interlinked questions. First, as a figure famous for expansive, land-based conquests, how did he begin to be deployed as paradigm for Britain's conception of its own empire and the modes of imperialism? This chapter will seek to add to Briant's study of Alexander as a 'visionary' model for empire - a thesis that he sees crystallising in the Scottish Enlightenment - by presenting some contrasting views from earlier in the century (section 3.1). It will then place William Robertson's picture alongside similar works from different intellectual contexts (section 3.2). The second investigation will interrogate how Alexander continued to be used increasingly for *comparationes* with British "heroes" (section 3.3). This will show that Alexander was also a conceptual vehicle for assessing the modes, morals and consequences of individual agency; how were the "heroes" of empire (and one particular villain) related to their predecessor, especially when those writing were acutely aware of Alexander's precedent as a previous conqueror of Asia? Could the comfortable distance between Alexander and British heroes be maintained as it had been in a civic context? Through the exploration of the

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[413] Briant 2005.

[414] It should also be noted again that these comments have not taken account of Briant (2012).

correspondences and differences between these many means of deploying Alexander, this chapter offers a greater understanding of the way in which Alexander functioned as a guide for eighteenth-century British imperialism. In the previous chapter, how writers sought to compare and, more importantly, distance Britain from Alexander demonstrated the values that they wished to espouse. He was initially a clear "Other" to British heroes, but increasingly became a controversial image of self.

3.1. COMMERCE AND CONQUEST

Recent scholarship on the reception and historiography of the ancient world has focused on the eighteenth century to order to understand the strong practical and ideological links between the ancient world and imperialism.[415] As has been noted, it is important to be sensitive to the various conceptualisations of "empire" during this period. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the British Isles, British colonies across the north Atlantic, trade dominance at sea and territorial rule over non-British "aliens" were all noted as "empire", discretely or in various combinations.[416] A British Empire was not conceived often as a coherent entity until the 1740s, and this formulation was not seen widely to include territory outside of the British Isles until the 1760s.[417] In the early Hanoverian period, neither public nor politician considered Britain's overseas interest to be conquest and rule of

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[415] Moore et al (2008) and Vlassopoulos (2010) for an overview. These have long been apparent in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Typical examples could be in education (Vasunia 2005) and historiography (Vasunia 2003; Briant 2005).

[416] Wilson (1994: 130) defines this as 'the ideologies and values which supported Britain's push for colonial acquisition and imperial consolidation...a historical phenomenon, an amalgam of practices, values and attitudes that are historically embedded and multivalent, bearing different cultural and political meanings in different contexts.' As Bowen (1998b: 6) argues empire stood for expression of power other than that of ruled territory and in much narrower geographical contexts. See, for instance, Vlassopoulos (2010: 29). For an overview of the pre-eighteenth century history of the term empire, see Marshall (1998a).

[417] Many of the conceptions of empire considered here were self-serving and have been shown to be inaccurate or fallaciously defined. Whether they are true or not, however, is not the concern of the current chapter. It was not until the 1740s that a contiguous 'Empire' was talked about and not until 1773 that Sir George McCartney famously observed "a vast Empire, on which the sun never sets," (a phrase, incidentally, that brought associations with empires as far back as ancient Persia) - Marshall (1998a: 8) or Marshall (2005: 6).

foreign territories and peoples. Far from the global empire it later became, in the decades after the Glorious Revolution, "imperialism" was primarily the expansion of British trade and settler colonies in North America and the Caribbean.[418]

The prevailing ideologies of this empire were based on the assumption that Britain was a trading nation that could deploy aggressive force at sea, but was not seeking to rule over non-British subjects on land or tyrannise at home. The ideological underpinning for such an empire emerged, as Armitage demonstrates, from the tension between demands for liberty - assumed to be the basis for the *grandezza* (greatness) or the success of a republican polity – and the necessity of holding an empire. Informed by a reading of Sallust, Machiavelli had argued that protecting the state against foreign powers necessitated expansion, but that expansion would inevitably lead to the suppression of liberty - the very cause of the republic's *grandezza* - and the eventual destruction of the polity. Sparta could have liberty by refusing to have an empire, while Rome attained glory and *temporary* safety through expansion, but neither could endure.[419] During the growth of European empires in the seventeenth century, many attempted solutions to this paradox made reference to the modern phenomenon of commerce.[420] By the 1690s, the crucial role of trade was offered consistently as a means of sustaining profitable expansion in the expanding markets of an increasingly

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[418] For the process of expansion see Black (2004: 67-88). The latter being North American colonies and West Indies plantations, with trading companies occupying more minor yet lucrative positions in India and elsewhere. It is worth noting that speaking of a metropolitan/periphery split in this period is anachronistic. As Marshall (1998a) and argues that the concept of empire developed from first a sense of the British Isles and aspiration to control of the neighbouring waters, before progressing to a notion of a British north Atlantic 'empire'. Even after the swing to the east, India did not replace Jamaica (formally) or even the former American Colonies (Britain's biggest trading partner) as the primary source of wealth and influence. India only really became acknowledged as a pre-eminent source of wealth in the second half of the eighteenth century.

[419] Armitage 2000: 125-32.

[420] Harrington's *Oceana* (1656) offered the possibility of a maritime, "confederate" version of Rome with constitutional safeguards to prevent excesses of individual power.

interconnected commercial world.[421] Trade could guarantee growth and any deployment of sea-power did not necessitate standing armies led by dangerous, liberty-threatening generals or kings.

Alexander was conceived as running counter to the values and methods preferred in these models of an emerging empire. When describing the prospects for a trade empire at the turn of the eighteenth century, the economist Nicholas Barbon (c1640–1698/9) argued in his *History of Commerce* (1690) for the extraordinary potential of England:

> Trade may be Assistant to the enlarging of Empire; and if Universal Empire or Dominion of very Large Extent can again be raised in the World, It seems more probable to be done by the help of Trade; By the increase of Ships at Sea, than by Arms at Land..... The Monarchy is both fitted for Trade and Empire ... [England could] extend its Dominion over all the Great Ocean: An Empire not less glorious, and of a much larger extent than either *Alexander's* or *Caesar's*.[422]

Barbon's words indicate that empire was a competitive endeavour conceptually constructed against the greatest from antiquity. Using the two most famous generals as a marker for the extent of empire, Barbon assumed that dominance of the seas would engender greater breadth and economic benefit than control over the land ever could.[423] The reflection was underpinned by the notion that there had been a category shift in the modes of empire builders, due in part to different aims and problems.[424] Barbon's thesis posited that empires in the ancient world were pursued mainly for fertile land, whereas trade in the contemporary world meant material

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[421] Armitage (2000: 142) notes that 'empire could only be compatible with liberty if it were redefined as maritime and commercial rather than territorial and military.'
[422] Barbon 1690: 40-1.
[423] See also Marshall (1998b: 5). This is not to argue that this acted as a maxim of monarchic or parliamentary power.
[424] See Akça Ataç (2006: 643) who argues that during the eighteenth century antiquity provided a "comprehensive picture of events; including all causes and effects, major and minor.... [a] dynamic cycle, through which civilisations rose and fell."

comforts could be bought, rendering conquest unnecessary.[425] Just as conquest was anachronistic, it was also impractical to return to the empires of Alexander, Rome, Assyria and Persian, since contemporary Europe presented a far more difficult object of conquest. Building an empire with a large army covering massive distances on land meant, for instance, defeating much larger populations and capturing countless fortified cities. This would be difficult enough even without accounting for the process of pacifying and ruling the conquered territory. Barbon identified this challenge as why Louis XIV could not emulate Rome and forge a universal empire in Europe.[426] Without such burdens, an empire of the sea could be greater and longer lasting than that of France or the conquests of Alexander.[427]

Another vector upon which rested the distinction between Britain and her past and present continental rivals was morality. When arguing for a Scottish trade empire, William Paterson (1658-1719) made his case based on the existential need to achieve trade dominance. He argued that a proprietary attitude to global trade was necessary in order to maintain economic and military parity with Scotland's continental rivals. To demonstrate this, he noted

> Trade will increase Trade ... money will beget money ... [and] thus this Door of the Seas, and the key of the universe with anything of a Reasonable management will of Course enable its proprietors to give Laws to both Oceans and to become Arbitrators of the Commercial world, without being liable to the fatigues, expenses

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[425] Drawing upon Armitage (2000) and Wilson (1994), Black (2004: 109) notes: "the vision and, increasingly, reality of a maritime commercial empire identified the success of a trading nation with the liberty of its government, and distinguished this process (in a positive fashion) from territorial conquest."

[426] Barbon 1690: 41-6. Similarly the differential in technology and learning between combatants had lessened the ease at which advanced polities could win - Barbon (1690: 41; 48).

[427] As Akça Ataç (2006: 644-8) has argued, the ideal for many British historians of Greece in the eighteenth century was the Athenian democracy with a strong naval tradition rather than the Roman Empire or Sparta. Tory historians especially offered criticism of the Spartan empire - inherently a critique of land war and Whig concerns with the Continental balance of power - while praising Athens and an ideology of "blue water" commercial dominance.

and dangers, or contracting the Guilt and blood of Alexander and Caesar.[428]

A universal empire could be achieved through trade, but Paterson made sure he used Alexander and Caesar to delineate the economic and moral high-ground of the commercial version. The former entailed unnecessary risk to liberty and a drain on profit (the 'fatigues, expenses and dangers' of war). Shorn of such risks, the latter would achieve proprietary economic momentum. In addition to their commercial limitations, martial turpitude stalked land-conquerors, while traders circumvented any 'guilt and blood'. If nations of the British Isles were to expand, it could not be at the expense of profit, its own liberty or over the corpses of other nations.

The ideals of a fledgling sea-empire were carried from the Restoration into the early reign of George I. The aspiration to trade and to control the seas remained ideological. As Marshall asserts, the British 'strongly identified with a flourishing oceanic commerce and with naval successes against European rivals.' Their rivals' methods were closely associated with the blood-stained immorality of conquest.[429] The connection between Alexander and contemporary Catholic empires was similar to that made in *The Rival Queens*, and the universal empire that Marlborough had fought against

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[428] William Paterson to the Company of Scotland, 17 January 1700, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 83.7.5,f.56^{r} as quoted in Armitage (2000: 159-60). Paterson would later go on to found the Bank of England.

[429] Marshall 1998a: 7; 1998b: 5. This was the preferred alternative to sending men like Marlborough to intervene against Catholic empires on the continent, who, even in victory could not entirely shake off the concerns for liberty that accompanied military ventures on the continent. What Baugh (1994: 203) calls a "blue-water strategy" was the will to deploy naval power to defend at home (predominantly) and protect colonial trade primarily to sustain the costs of maritime power - see a summary in Marshall (1998b: 5-6). As the latter notes there was never a plan to impose 'naval hegemony'. As Gould (2000: xvii) argues the continuing popularity of empire even amongst the poor who did not benefit lay in a sense that it was necessary to the protection of Britain. Paterson's or Barbon's empires of trade could only be drawn thanks to an acute sense of the peculiarity and power of the Protestant polity. This was the fundamental basis of this idealised mode of conduct in expansion. Any empire was one fundamentally in opposition to Papist rule - i.e. a statement of Henry VIII's *imperium* over the British Isles in the Acts of Restraint of Settlement of 1533. Wars with Catholic Spain and, by the end of the seventeenth century, the Catholic France of Louis XIV, renewed a sense of Protestant pre-destiny in England, part of which was manifest in the hatred of the modes of "absolutism" - see Marshall 1998a.

under a flag of liberty at Blenheim.[430] Although primarily described as reincarnations of Rome, the waning Spanish and French empires were also alluded to through reference to Alexander, Caesar or the later Persian kings. The freedom and commercial dynamism of Britain's Protestant empire was imagined favourably by the British, and set against perceived tyranny and commercial decadence of their continental enemies.[431] Maritime wars were usually more popular since they were protecting trade and promoting commerce - which itself brought liberty - whereas continental wars were seen as threatening liberty and furthering the individual ambitions of this aristocrat or that monarch.[432] These concepts of empire offer further insight into why it was so important to cover Marlborough's victories with a veneer of unselfish liberty. Conquest and commercial empire were mutually exclusive ideas: one was ephemeral, unsuccessful and encouraged tyranny; the other was successful, moral and durable. As a useful marker for scale Alexander had provided a platform for Anglo-British heroes to be celebrated at home, while the association with Louis and France and land-based conquests of the past, made him a negative imperial axiom.

The contrast between the trade empire of Britain and the conquests of Alexander was used to inform politics during the 1720s, when the concerns for the security of overseas trade was particularly fractious. From 1714, mercantilist imperialism was promoted by the ruling Whig set in contrast to the "Tory greed and Catholic Tyranny" that had been defeated in the accession of George II.[433] In the 1720s, "George's Peace" or the prosperity brought by merchants was a concept offered by Walpole and his allies in

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[430] See chapter 2.2.
[431] Pagden 1995: 46-52; 64-70. See Orr (2001: 115 -131) on Persia.
[432] Wilson 1994. Especially pertinent given the Hanoverian's continental interests. Conquest was hardly an issue in North America as it was seen as a virgin territory (native Indians were not really considered to have been conquered). Alexander's association with universal expansion, Louis XIV and arbitrary government, and the disrespectability of conquest as a pursuit for its own ends meant attacks against him were also implicit attacks on the French empire in Europe.
[433] As opposed to the Pretender. Shields 1990: 22.

contrast to the deployment of British soldiers to fight imperial wars.[434] Walpole's allies portrayed their leader as a steady helmsman in contrast to his sabre-rattling rivals.[435] As shown in the previous chapter, in the 1740s Fielding used Alexander to turn Walpole into a criminal for his cronyism and bald self-aggrandisement.[436] One example from over a decade earlier shows the adaptability of the Alexander paradigm. Edward Young (1683 - 1765) used Alexander as a means of drawing support for Walpole's pro-commercial, anti-war policy.[437] His most successful work, a set of satires entitled *Love of Fame* (1728), was dedicated by Young to Walpole himself, and begins with the contention that ambition had been the driving force of a long list of British 'fools' who tried to achieve recognition though wars, only for their efforts to end in failure. The last satire of the collection envisages the success of commerce. Set against the desires of ambitious men, Young argues that Britain can achieve with sailcloth instead of swords:

> While I survey the blessings of our Isle,
> Her arts triumphant in the Royal smile,
> Her publick wounds bound up, her credit high,
> Her commerce spreading sails in every sky,
> The pleasing scene recalls my theme agen,
> And shews the madness of ambitious men,
> Who fond of bloodshed, draw the murd'ring sword
> And burn to give mankind a single Lord.[438]

The ancient martial panoply - ambition and madness - so familiar from Milton and others was given a twist in the context of commercialism. Young rails at past conquerors and would-be modern conquistadors, mockingly

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[434] Shields 1990: 21-32. A policy he staunchly continued up until the War of Jenkins' Ear in 1739, during which he was reticent to actively protect British interests. See Black (1990: 13-4) for examples of this.

[435] See Armitage (2000: chapt. 7), for this discourse in the 1730s.

[436] See p. 107 ff.

[437] Although a failed Whig politician, Young did not exclusively pander to the Whig administration, but published in the later Tory version of *The Tatler*. These satires were published in separate folios between 1725 and their collection as the *Love of Fame* in 1728.

[438] Young 1728: 162-3. A theme echoed elsewhere in Young's *Ocean* (1728) and *Imperium Pelagi or The Merchant* (1730) - see Shields (1990: 23).

asking why anyone would forge a land empire or fight expansive wars when peaceful trade could be so profitable. Conquest could only result in an ego-centric destructive outcome, one unconcerned with the public benefit:

> But daring men there are (awake, my muse,
> And raise thy verse) who bolder frenzy chuse;
> Who stung by glory, rave, and bound away;
> The world their Field, and human-kind their prey.
> The Grecian chief, th'Enthusiast of his pride,
> With Rage, and Terror stalking by his side,
> Raves around the globe; he soars into a God!
> Stand fast, Olympus! And sustain his nod.
> The pest divine in horrid grandeur reigns,
> And thrives on mankind's miseries, and pains.
> What slaughter'd hosts! What cities in a blaze!
> What wasted countries! And what crimson seas!
> [...]
> Why want we then encomiums on the storm,
> Or famine, or volcano?[439]

Alexander's crimes and the dismal effects of the Macedonian's conquests were by this point well-rehearsed. The mere mention of the 'Grecian chief' was enough to evoke the prime candidate for censure, although in the copy received by Robert's son, Horace Walpole, the recipient has helpfully annotated a handwritten "Alexander" in the margin.[440] The penultimate couplet counts the human wastage in the destruction of cities, men and countries. In common cause with Fielding's notion of criminal conquest, here conquest is human and economic destruction, a storm across the bows of British trade.

The final couplet of the selection reiterates the premise specified by the work's title and another theme Young shared with Fielding: the pursuit of fallacious virtue (false 'encomiums').[441] The finale of the piece is praise for contemporary Britain under Robert Walpole and George I. It attempts to

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[439] Young 1728: 163.
[440] It is now in the British library (Shelf Mark: C.45.c.18).
[441] See p. 101.

contrast the emptiness of the fame pursued by conquerors with that which Young considers to be true virtue:

> Ye vain! Desist from your erroneous strife;
> Be wise, and quit the false sublime of life.
> The true ambition there alone resides,
> Where justice vindicates, and wisdom guides;
> Where inward dignity joins outward state,
> Our purpose good, as our achievement great;
> Where publick blessings publick praise attend,
> Where glory is our motive, not our end.
> Behold a Prince! Whom no swoln thoughts inflame;
> No pride of thrones, no fever after fame;
> But when welfare of mankind inspires,
> And death in view to dear bought glory fires
> Proud conquest then, then regal pomps delight
> The crowns, then triumphs sparkle in his sight.[442]

In a manner similar to Steele's praise of Prince Eugene of Saxony for his humble comportment and civic service, Young praises internal characteristics - justice and wisdom – but it is their ends – 'public blessings' – that are crucial.[443] The subsequent dichotomy is between fame actively and erroneously sought (fuelled by a 'fever' that again evokes Seneca's madness) and true martial glory received. George will fight, but in the same fashion as Marlborough. Only through service to the public good or protecting 'mankind', will he receive the fruits of this righteous conquest (his 'regal pomps' and 'triumphs'). Britannia was to be seen as a ship captained by King George, with Walpole as the helmsman guiding her through the storms. Young differentiates British commercialism and situates George's realm as the sea that had given, and would continue to give, his country such success.[444] Young's Britain has martial power *in potentia* to be deployed only

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[442] Young 1728: 173-4.
[443] See pp. 97-8.
[444] He is also styled 'sovereign of the sea'. The storms were particularly the collapse of the South Sea trading bubble, Armitage (2000: chapt. 7).

when necessary. It would not use the rapacious and unprofitable approach of conquerors.[445]

These examples demonstrate how closely incipient imperialism was entwined with values that championed the protection of the nation. Describing the success of Marlborough in terms of liberty had separated the victor of Blenheim from the conquests of Alexander and those of the French. The empire of the seas similarly provided a solution to the problem of maintaining a distinction between expansion overseas and the tyranny of continental empires. But in the context of imperial expansion, "Alexanders" were not just against civic liberty. They also stifled prosperity and doubly represented a commonplace of empire opposed to what guaranteed Britain's future.[446] Chapter 2 showed how conquest was bifurcated conceptually into either fighting for liberty or for selfish ambition. Similarly, there was the free, sea-borne, commercial and financially progressive British Empire, and the tyrannical, land-based and regressive empires of Alexander or France. This latter category was synonymous with the negative definition of "conquest" and "conquerors". This connoted destruction, tyranny and crimes as against civic society, but also a fundamental unprofitability when set against the commercialism of Britain's sea-empire. England held Alexander as apt in scale, but his methods were outdated, impractical and morally unacceptable. When tested initially against the demands of imperial utility, Alexander was found wanting and clearly separated from Britain's avowed modes.

3.2. CONQUEST AS UTILITY

The following two sections will explore two routes by which Alexander's paradigm was reinvigorated. Emerging primarily through an engagement with a historical awareness that ran beyond the immediate "crimes" of

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[445] This conceit was further celebrated in Young's *The Merchant* (1730), which praised Walpole and George II for negotiating the treaty of the Triple Alliance in 1729 and securing a 'hiatus in imperial wars' that could provide an opportunity for British fleets to exploit global trade. See Shields (1990: 23).

[446] This was rooted in the concerns addressed in the 1690s.

Alexander's campaigns, commercialism was considered to be an important gauge for understanding Alexander's virtue. When placed in comparison with Alexander's paradigm, Britain's empire was initially comfortably perceived to protect and uphold British values. The works below not only reconfigure Alexander's potential for imperial utility, but indicate how Britain's conception of self was unsettled by the experience of empire.

Milton and Fielding had criticised Alexander for the destruction he wrought on humanity. Briant has shown, however, that a new appreciation of Alexander's conquests was clearly articulated in the last decades of the eighteenth century. Building upon the assumption that expansion should benefit the prosperity of all peoples and nations, prominent historians of Greece and India accepted him as a progressive, enlightened figure.[447] This notion was most expressly stated by the Scottish Historian William Robertson (1721–1793) in his *Historical Disquisition Concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India* published in 1792.[448] Briant places Robertson's work in the context of the discussion of Britain's future empire in India. Following Adam Smith, Robertson was convinced that empire should facilitate the spread of commerce and therefore benefit the nations that it affected.[449] In response to the trial of Warren Hastings, Robertson was concerned with producing a detailed case–history to prove that India was a 'magnificent and long-enduring civilisation'.[450] In doing so, Briant proposes, Robertson hoped to inspire a more 'tolerant' approach to governing India,

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[447] See Briant 2005: 2.

[448] The following discussion of Robertson is drawing heavily upon Briant's analysis. Robertson had also commented on Alexander's commercial schemes in his 1777 *History of America*.

[449] Briant 2005: 2: "... while underscoring the admirable durability of Indian customs, also sought to suggest that the European conquest should not be accompanied by the brutal destruction of 'indigenous' society: it should rather find support in the traditions of India. As a follower of the ideas of Adam Smith, firmly convinced of the joint role of Progress and Providence, Robertson judged that the European expansion should favor the development of communications, of commerce, and thus of the prosperity of nations. It is here that the history of Alexander and his own reflections on the contemporary world nourished each other."

[450] See Carnall (1997: 212) for background and accusations of India's destruction levelled by Smith himself during the trial of Warren Hastings.

inspired by the collaborative and progressive methods of Alexander, and in contrast to the litany of abuses aired publically in the late 1780s (a context returned to in a fuller discussion of the Impeachment of Hastings in section 3.3).[451]

His construction of Alexander's methods had a complex genealogy. Robertson's interest – like many historians at the time - was with the aims of historical figures in addition to their actions, and his views on Alexander had many predecessors in the eighteenth century.[452] The historian, and successor to Robertson as historiographer royal for Scotland, John Gillies (1747–1836) had referred to Alexander's cities as evidence of his plans to extend commerce and spread civilisation; Robertson himself had praised Peter the Great as "benefactor to mankind" for civilising his people.[453] Briant identifies Robertson's biggest influence as Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* (1748), which suggested that Alexander wished to unite the Indies with Europe in maritime commerce.[454] There was an inflection of the Alexander of Plutarch's *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute* which cites his spread of civilisation as evidence of him actually doing what philosophers only taught.[455] Robertson expanded on the idea of Montesquieu to show specifically how Alexander aimed to use his empire to spread trade.[456] Briant notes that Robertson appreciated the "precision and constancy of Alexander's plans for navigation and commerce."[457] The crucial moment of inspiration was when Alexander witnessed the wealth derived from commerce flowing through Tyre. After its destruction, Robertson saw Alexander hoping to replicate its success:

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[451] Briant 2005: 8-9.
[452] Briant 2005: 4.
[453] Briant 2005: 4-5.
[454] Montesquieu 1989: 366.
[455] Plut. *De. Alex. Fort.* 1.4. An issue that has not adequately been addressed by Briant (2005) is the equation of spreading civilisation with spreading commerce. This is not stated in any of the ancient texts. How these two ideas were equated by the time of Robertson requires further study.
[456] Especially John Gillies. See Briant (2005) for this argument or Carnall (1997: 210; 50-1).
[457] Briant 2005: 3.

> As soon as he had accomplished the destruction of Tyre, and reduced Egypt to subjection, he formed the plan of rendering the empire which he purposed to establish, the centre of commerce as well as the seat of dominion. With this view he founded a great city, which he honoured with his own name... that... it might command the trade both of the East and West. This situation was chosen with such discernment, that Alexandria soon became the chief commercial city in the world... to the discovery of the navigation of the Cape of Good Hope, commerce, particularly that of the East Indies, continued to flow in the channel which the sagacity and foresight of Alexander had marked out for it.[458]

Later as the 'discoverer' of India, he held plans for setting up networks of commerce traversing sea and land all leading through Egypt.[459] Alexander wished to bring Asia and Europe together for the benefit of mankind. In Robertson's estimation his was no longer just an 'expedition of conquest and plunder', as it had been considered by Milton.[460] Briant therefore surmises that in the late-eighteenth century 'a conqueror can only be ranked among the heroes of history if the war he conducts spreads civilisation.'[461] This was a version of utility that finally answered De Saint-Pierre. Through holding a visionary commercial scheme for the empire he conquered, Robertson offered a constructive outlet for Alexander's ambition. In the works considered previously, it was only seen to result in selfish achievements, false fame and destruction.

There are two further instances of similar arguments being developed in England: the first predates Montesquieu's publication by over two decades and the second pre-empts Robertson by three. They cannot be considered a consequence of a Scottish Enlightenment appreciation of the possibilities of empire or be set in the context of the impeachment of Hastings. Presented here with Robertson, they offer a fuller narrative of the changing conception

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[458] Robertson 1778: 15-16.
[459] Pierre Briant (2005:3) has noted the fine distinction made in *History of America:* 'Alexander discovered the country more than he conquered it.'
[460] Briant 2005: 3.
[461] Briant 2005: 5.

of Britain's empire across the century. They also underline a much earlier transition to the notion of Alexander's vision in England, and the case for positing an amended narrative for the redefinition of Alexander's utility.[462]

Judged on whether his conquests could facilitate favourable conditions for human development, Alexander initially revealed an anti-humanitarian and anti-commercial bias to his character and methods, in keeping with other critics of the early century.[463] Daniel Defoe's *A General History of Discoveries and Improvements* (1725-6) tracked the growth of historical polities, their important discoveries and how these discoveries led to the improvement of mankind.[464] The example of the ancient Phoenicians lay at the heart of his analysis. After the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, the subsequent diaspora spread their agency and desire to trade across the cities of the world.[465] This was an important moment in the history of mankind because Defoe considered trade to be the catalyst for human development: 'commerce [was] a friend to all improvement' and exchange spread ideas, materials and circulated 'every improving quality throughout the world'.[466] Likewise Defoe lauded the endeavour and power of the Egyptians and especially the descendants of the Phoenicians who re-settled Tyre.[467] Conquering nations and generals, conversely, were a blow to the 'learned world' as they countered the activities of such improving individuals:

> What injury to the general improvement of Mankind, has Pride, and the Ambition of Men, as well as States and Governments, as Kings and Princes, been in the World, who by introducing Wars and Devastations, and by inhuman bloody measures brought Desolation upon flourishing Nations; and had as at one blow, overthrown learned Improvements, all the wisdom and

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462 For this political context, see Briant (2005: 8).
463 Chapter 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.
464 Defoe 1726.
465 Defoe 1726b: 76. Of the Phoenicians he notes: 'they were as so many Instructors to the nations to which they came.'
466 Defoe 1726b: 77.
467 Defoe 1726b: 78-82. 'Trade is certainly a patron of the arts, as it is the Mother of Industry; Commerce is naturally an encourager of Learning, and had by its Correspondence been the greatest assistance to human learning.'

> knowledge of Arts, and of useful Inventions in the Countries they have Conquered?[468]

Defoe argued that the model of self-aggrandising virtue – driven by 'ambition' - was useless for humanity's development and denied Alexander's conquests a progressive role in the history of commerce.[469] Specifically, he laments at what resulted thanks to Alexander's eradication of Tyre at the denouement of the famous and lengthy siege in the formative years of his campaigns:

> How many Masters of Science, how many Teachers and Instructors in useful Arts did *Alexander* the Great, notwithstanding his being a lover of learned men, bury in the Ruins of that great City Tyre; and in the bloody Revenge which he took of the Citizens... So how many Philosophers, Astronomers, and Men of Genius for all sorts of virtuous Improvements did *Alexander* destroy in the Ruin of that one City?[470]

It was not that Alexander did not appreciate the arts of peace, but that his own petulance in wanting to impose his will on the city meant that its potential was lost. Unlike Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed merely *the city*, Alexander destroyed the very life force of human development, the "improving" men that perpetuated commerce and who were crucified in large numbers.[471] Imagined to be Alexander's attempt at recompense, Defoe described the building of Alexandria as 'one sorry port at the mouth of the Nile'. He further chastises the plans of Alexander

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[468] Defoe 1726b: 90.

[469] Defoe 1726b: 90. Despite credit for the Romans attempts to civilise some nations, in Defoe's estimation they did not manage to 'encourage Arts and Sciences' and the art of peace was 'not their province.'

[470] Defoe 1726b: 94. Defoe used the example of the death of Archimedes at the Siege of Syracuse to demonstrate a similar episode for Roman conquest.

[471] Defoe 2008: 103. The second taking of Tyre, Defoe notes, was 'not a stop to their Trade, but an utter ruin to it; for *Alexander* took the City by Storm, murther'd 20000 of the Citizens in heat of blood; hang'd 2000 of the most wealthy merchants, upon Gibbets or Crosses .... in a Word, he resolved, in his tyrannic Rage, to make himself a Terror to the rest of the World, and to make *Tyre* an Example of it, to terrify any other city shou'd dare to stand out against him.'

> as if he, when he had destroy'd the Merchants, who were the life of the Commerce at Tyre, could remove the Course of the Trade too, whither he pleas'd; whereas the foreign Correspondence, which was the life of Merchandizing, depended on the men he had destroyed.[472]

Lacking the men, this foundation was inadequate and, despite its later success, Defoe saw its reach as limited to

> between *Egypt* and *Greece* and between *Egypt* and *Italy*, whereas the *Tyrian* Merchants had establish'd a Commerce thro' the whole *Mediterranean* ... which Alexander never had any Interest in, or Influence over, nor did the knowledge and study of Arts and Sciences ever come to any extraordinary height at *Alexandria* as it had done at Tyre.[473]

Alexander's empire simply did not add the same value because his focus precluded westward expansion where the agents of Tyre had apparently flourished. In a similar fashion, Defoe criticised the Romans for the destruction of Carthage and the loss of Africa as a trading region. He suggests that it would have been most beneficial to contemporary Europe if it had been sustained. These destructive acts were stripped of their glory and judged as failures to achieve human improvement:

> What a loss then to the Commerce of Europe have those two Actions been, which Men in those Days call'd Glorious; and how have we Reason to blast the Memory of Alexander the Great, and Scipio Africanus with a mark of infamy never to be wip'd out, for destroying only two governments in the World, which were qualified to make all the rest of Mankind great and happy?[474]

While Defoe couches the foundation of Alexandria as atonement, his emphasis on the placement and future role – like Robertson - relies on Alexander holding a vision of empire and commerce:

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[472] Defoe 2008: 86-7.
[473] Defoe 2008: 87. Defoe's own italics.
[474] The last line being the same assumption that Fielding made.

> he was convinc'd what a blow he had struck to the general Correspondence of Mankind, and how he had, *as it were*, put a stop to the Trade of the World; and finding it absolutely necessary to restore things,...., especially for preserving the important Trade of *Egypt*, and the *Indies*; he resolves to erect a new *Tyre*, for an emporium of Commerce, in the mouth of the great River *Nile*...[475]

Defoe saw that Alexander had an appreciation of the role that Tyre played in joining the three continents together in productive commerce. Alexandria, furthermore *was* commercial - 'a place of very great business' - and beneficial to learning. It was just not a match to Tyre with its free merchants.

Genre was an important reason for Defoe's opinion, especially highlighted when compared to his contemporary Edward Young. Since he imported wholesale the axiom of Alexander as a destructive conqueror, Young's political satires could flatly reject Alexander as a commercial benefactor. His task was not to engage with the veracity of such a model, but to draw out a defence of Walpole. One consequence of Defoe's engagement with a broader historical context was once he had established his criterion, he could criticise the destruction of Tyre, but not ignore the founding of Alexandria, nor how it developed subsequently. Placing Alexander in the broader framework of a history of commerce encouraged an appreciation of his aims and legacy in addition to considerations of the acts of conquest themselves (murder, rape and pillage). Defoe sought to label Alexander as anti-commercial. But he still saw that Alexander had the vision to hold a plan for improving trade and the agency to enact it. It just so happened that his plan had relatively limited scope. Considering his conquests against a standard that expected them to promote trade recast the question of his utility, previously limited to civic society or human destruction.[476] In the works considered which predate Defoe, Alexander's historical legacy has been considered in the context of his effects on his polity, his long lived fame or his divine role according to the

[475] Defoe 2008: 103-4.
[476] See chapter 2 passim.

schema of the Old Testament (excusing Robertson).[477] Defoe's conclusions on his legacy were far removed from Alexander's acting as a divinely inspired instrument or destructive monarch. Stretching the test of utility across a historical template was a significant category change. It allowed a broader perspective to be operative upon Alexander's vision and legacy. Alexander's achievements could be judged outside of the "closed" republican civic space of post-Restoration Britain. This occurred alongside, even before, some of the harshest critiques of his role in civic society.[478]

Conversely, Alexander's partial "liberation" was still circumscribed.[479] Defoe, in broad agreement with the ideological dichotomy of his contemporaries, argued that the British sea-empire should avoid Alexander's approach and instead pursue a 'moderate free trade ideology'. Defoe wanted British advantage in trade and could countenance sea-power to protect British shipping, but he did not want dominance through monopoly or by attacking the trade of one's opposition. Presaging Adam Smith, commerce was seen to rely upon the interplay between the various constituent parts of the world, across which resources and services had been spread by God. Only through mutually beneficial trade could these resources be brought together for maximum human progress.[480] In this analogy, the Phoenicians were the ancient equivalents of the British, whose commercial empire would bring the same benefits to the world. Rather than competitive wars, it was through developments in navigation and, above all, the entrepreneurial spirit of its free merchants that global trade would improve.[481] These same

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[477] His effects upon Greece had also been considered. See n. 470.

[478] Montesquieu visited England between 1728 and 1731 before he started to write *De l'Esprit des Lois*. Since they overlap in this regard it is tantalising to suggest they could have met, but it is at least viable to suggest the potential influence of Defoe on Montesquieu's work – see Montesquieu 1989: xviii-x.

[479] According to Temple Stanyan (1739; first published in 1707) he and his father ended Greek liberty.

[480] In *A General History of Trade* (1713) he notes "Trade ought always to be Safe, and that let Nations Fight, Quarrel, and make War as they please, they should never War with Trade" – see Aravamudan (2008: 49).

[481] Defoe 2008: 76. He continues 'but it will appear then that the Phoenicians were the Englishmen of that Age,...,they were the greatest improvers of what others invented.'

"Englishmen" had been destroyed by Alexander at Tyre. Defoe contrasted Alexander's record and that of Rome with the commercial utility of these nations they erased. This emphasised the differences between them and the ideals of Defoe's empire of free merchants. Defoe's preference for British liberty at home and abroad inevitably pinned Alexander to a method of imperialism practiced by Europe's continental land-powers.

Robertson and Defoe agree on one aspect of Alexander's commercial vision. Notably, Montesquieu credits Alexander with appreciating the opportunities for sea trade 'only with the discovery of the Indian Sea'. At the time of his foundation of Alexandria, it is contended that he merely intended to control Egypt.[482] Montesquieu was explicit that Alexander did not 'dream of commerce, the thought of which could only come to him only with the discovery of the Indian sea'.[483] Defoe – like Robertson later - placed emphasis on Alexander's commercial vision at the time of his foundation suggesting that Defoe may have had a crucial role in describing an "early" moment for Alexander's vision of commercial empire.[484] The task of maintaining an ideology of commercialism alongside liberty was to become unsustainable by the late eighteenth century (section 3.3 explores specific case studies that highlight the growing fracture between the two ideological interests).

The second pre-Robertson example also drew upon Montesquieu's view of Alexander. It came from George Lyttelton one of the coterie of writers and politicians that had built the foundations for Alexander's ruin as a civic hero.[485] The supposed close affinity that Charles XII of Sweden had for Alexander and the occasion of Pope's 'slander' of the two 'Madmen' allowed Lyttelton to redefine his own vision of Alexander in his *Dialogues of the Dead*

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[482] *The Spirit of the Laws* 4.8 translated in Montesquieu 1989: 366.
[483] *The Spirit of the Laws* 4.8 translated in Montesquieu 1989: 366.
[484] This indicates that they share a common source.
[485] See p. 96. George Lyttelton, in addition to writing his praise of Marlborough, was patron of both Pope and Fielding, was part of the clique of opposition "patriots" to Walpole and married the Daughter of Sir William Temple. He served in various offices in politics until 1756 – Gerrard (2009). He was indebted to Montesquieu for his style and genre, for example his *Persian Letters* (1721).

(1760).[486] The dialogue between Charles of Sweden and Alexander ostensibly was written to refute the view of various "scribblers" from Horace and Lucian onwards on the subject of the Alexander's achievements.[487] After the combatants show initial solidarity against poetic invective, the imagined discussion degenerates into squabbling over respective records. Given the greater room for expression by Lyttelton and the better lines, Alexander wins this battle comprehensively.[488] The initial sparing held little new material for those who had read Plutarch or the parlour anecdotes of periodicals like *The Tatler*.[489]

Lyttelton's innovation was to defend Alexander's actions by rationalising some of his unsavoury policies. When Charles teases him about his claim to divinity, Lyttelton has Alexander defend it as merely a matter of policy to secure his conquests of Asia.[490] He then emphasises his wisdom in following his father's 'mortal' political acumen and Aristotle's wisdom in his 'grand

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[486] See Butt 1979: 349-51. Although based on the format of Lucian's popular satiric accounts, they were a means of providing moral commentary after the version of Fénelon.

[487] Lyttelton 1760. Written after his retirement from office and ennoblement. The work is arranged after Lucian's arrangement with dialogue XIII for the conversation between Diogenes and Alexander, which is mainly concerned with sending up Alexander's divinity and attacking Aristotle. See dialogue XIV for Philip and Alexander on his parentage and the worthiness of his adversaries and dialogue XII for a debate on the better man between Hannibal, Alexander, Scipio and Minos. Peter the Great distances himself from the type of heroism of Alexander and Caesar but agrees with Louis le Grand that they both succumbed to their fiery natures and drunkenness in dialogue II. This example is prominent in my narrative because it is overlooked by Briant 2005, although I am drawing upon his analysis for the themes identified here. For an overview of the *Dialogues* and their literary context, see Butt (1979: 348-52).

[488] Criticising Charles for his rash actions at the battle of Bender, Alexander claims himself as the 'ablest commander the world has ever seen' a point undisputed by his interlocutor. Charles is forced to concede (1760: 212) that 'you excelled me in conduct, in policy, and in true magnanimity,' but responds (1760: 217) that he was free from vices: 'I never was drunk; I killed no friend in the riot of a feast; I fired no palace at the instigation of a harlot.' Alexander rails against Charles' viciousness when sober and the need for the softening of a female touch. Charles points out that many of the excesses of Alexander were conducted sober which leads into Alexander's apology (1760: 219) for the crimes of his life in a manner similar to Arrian's (*Anab.* 7.30.1) conclusion - 'the pride of such amazing successes, the servitude of the Persians, and barbarian flattery had intoxicated my mind.'

[489] Like Fielding's exploration of empty virtue in his dialogue with Diogenes, the genre presumably would offer more to the non-juvenile audience than the biographies of Brunswick and Christina. See chapter 2.4.

[490] After Arrian (7.13). His claim to divinity is not entirely renounced as he notes when in India his conquests were the exploits of the son of Jupiter.

designs.' These were his commercial ambitions and his citation of them allows Alexander to defend his record most ably:

> It was the son of Philip who planted Greek colonies as far as the Indies; who formed the projects of trade more extensive than his empire itself; who laid the foundations of them in the midst of his wars; who built Alexandria, to be the centre and staple of commerce between Europe, Asia, and Africa...[491]

After Montesquieu, Lyttelton inverts Defoe's apologetic foundation of Alexandria to argue that Alexander had conducted his conquests with a vision towards the future prosperity of the world, and provided an answer to critics of his destructive repute.[492] Lyttelton joined Montesquieu's inter-continental empire with Defoe's concept of an "early" vision and precedes Robertson's notion by thirty years.[493] He also makes Alexander a patron of exploration outside of his time: 'who sent Nearchus to navigate the unknown India seas, and intended to have gone himself from those seas to the Pillars of Hercules – that is, to have explored the passage.'[494] Like Defoe, Lyttelton argues that trade and navigation were seen as crucial for the development of mankind, making Alexander's unfulfilled ambitions a precursor for later improving discoveries.[495]

It is the end to which this commercial development is made that sets this piece apart from Defoe and the later work of Robertson. The next lines of Alexander's self-eulogy reconstructed Alexander's style of kingship, from which he emerges as a figure far from the tyrant of Lee's *Rival Queens*:

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[491] Lyttelton 1760: 212.

[492] As Pierre Briant (2005) has argued this idea owed a great deal to the work of the Baron De Montesquieu and the shamelessly pro-Alexander writing of Voltaire. The latter features elsewhere in Lyttelton's dialogues.

[493] I have been unable to ascertain whether this was his own invention in response to the sources, a development from Defoe or from another source. For a discussion of how the various sources could be read to provide a trans-continental vision for Alexandria in the context of the French occupation of the city in 1798 see Chapter 4.2. Further work is required in order to find the source of this idea and Lyttelton's particular influences.

[494] In Lyttelton 1760: 212.

[495] In particular this foreshadows Adam Smith's citation in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) of the discovery of America and the opening up of the sea routes to India as the "greatest and most important events in the history of mankind, leading to mutual prosperity for the united parts of the world" - quotation given in Butt (1979: 205).

> It was the son of Philip who, after subduing the Persians, governed them with such lenity, such justice, and such wisdom, that they loved him even more than ever they had loved their natural kings, and who, by intermarriages and all methods that could best establish a coalition between the conquerors and the conquered, united into one people.[496]

This description leaned heavily upon Montesquieu's appreciation of Alexander's tender relationship with his conquered subjects: he had asked 'who is this conqueror who is mourned by all the peoples he subjected?' Similarly, Montesquieu appreciated Alexander's attempts to bind and improve the nations that he conquered: 'nothing strengthens a conquest more than unions by marriage between two peoples.... Alexander, [...] sought to unite the two peoples.' The uniting strategy, for Montesquieu was entwined with Alexander's view of the commercial benefit he could bring to his conquests: 'and in every country he entered, his first ideas, his first designs, were always to do something to increase its prosperity and power.'[497] The question Alexander triumphantly asks Charles was an inversion of the question posed by De Saint-Pierre:

> What, sir, did you [Charles] do to advance the trade of your subjects, to procure any benefit to those you had vanquished, or to convert any enemy into a friend?[498]

The last point is countered weakly by Charles, but the other two claims stand uncontested, as a triumph to Alexander's utility. Alexander emerges as a figure whose overarching goals vindicated certain excesses, rather than one whose achievements were rendered null due to his lack of an appropriate guiding principle. Elsewhere, Lyttelton had Scipio claim that Caesar used his ambition to garner 'the empire of the world', but he identified Alexander as at least a man who had the ambition to do something great while holding an

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[496] Lyttelton 1760: 212. Alexander does admit that continuing his conquest to India was a mistake - he chides himself that he should have stayed to manage his empire.
[497] Montesquieu 1989: 149.
[498] Lyttelton 1760: 213.

empire.[499] Gone was the self-fulfilling ambition criticised by Fielding, replaced instead by an encompassing vision and a respect for the empire he conquered.

To understand Lyttelton's piece further, it is worth considering the Andrew Ramsey's *The Voyages of Cyrus* (1728). Like Defoe, Ramsey argued that the commercial utility of Tyre was a good analogy for the British polity. Built upon an understanding of commerce in common with Defoe, Ramsey reinvented a British monarchical system under a Jacobite king that was conducive to the promulgation of trade.[500] London would become like Tyre - an 'emporium' under which a great empire of trade could be formed.[501] Unlike Defoe, Ramsey saw that the British neither could all be Phoenician merchants nor that a complex monarchy could be modelled on a single city. Instead, Britain would combine the commercial dynamism of Tyre, but within an empire with the stature of Persia.[502] To fend off charges of arbitrary monarchy that stalked Jacobite and Persian kings, the monarch had to be seen to protect the rights of the people. Given Cyrus' prominence as a past

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[499] To appreciate how far this was a unique appraisal concerned with the ideology of civic state and commercialist empire, it is worth noting that Lyttelton was selective in whom from the ancient world received such glowing re-imagination. The dialogue (XXIX) between Caesar and Scipio sees the tyrant of Rome attempt to explain his actions as resulting from a concern to protect himself from a faction and the republic from the dominion of the senate and Pompey. Scipio quickly exposes his protestations with his incredulity: 'You would therefore have me think that you contended for the equality and liberty of the Romans against the tyranny of Pompey and his lawless adherents....but your success, and the despotism you afterwards exercised, took off those disguises and showed clearly that the aim of all your actions was tyranny.' Caesar's response is to cast off pretensions and claim that it is natural for prominent men to contest for sovereignty. This allows Lyttelton to express through Scipio a characterisation of virtue in the public good that placed liberty above territorial conquest and ambition below the law – the reciprocal traits had once sunk both Caesar and Alexander. Caesar's argument that liberty is desirable until 'we come to suffer by it,' is obviously self-serving, leaving the final judgment clearly in Scipio's favour and drawing out the same broad argument for serving others from the previous dialogue. In the case of Caesar and Scipio, the preservation of liberty and the destruction of Rome meant that Caesar cannot but be condemned as a tyrant.

[500] For a full analysis of this article see Ahn (2011).

[501] Ahn (2011: 423). Ramsey *The Travels of Cyrus* (1728: 86) quoted in Ahn (2011: 231) notes "By improving those Productions of Nature by Manufactures, the national Riches are augmented. And it is by carrying these Fruits of Industry to other Nations that a solid Commerce is establish'd in a great empire."

[502] Ahn (2011) gives a full account also of Ramsay's mainly French influences such as Bousset and Fenelon. It is uncertain whether he would have read Defoe's article since they are almost concurrent, but the praise of Tyre is made upon similar lines.

subject of princely advice, Ramsey turned to the founder of the Persian Empire. Cyrus' attraction was that he offered legal and moral virtues, his martial prowess was not for ambitious wars, but "[only] to defend our liberties," and also that he "acquired the true art of carrying out foreign trade."[503] A move reminiscent of Sir William Temple, the use of Cyrus attempted to circumvent any latent association with absolutist government and pinned an expansionist model of commercial monarchy to a king with an impeccable reputation for good governance and respect for the laws. This was in contrast to the arbitrary model that had been foisted upon the Stuarts during the Restoration and an antidote to the rule of an Alexander.

Lyttelton deployed a similar combination of monarchy and trade to explain Alexander's use for his Persian and Greek subjects. By describing him as a just and compassionate leader, Lyttelton makes Alexander a Cyrus for the commercial age, who acted for the benefit of internal and world trade. Lyttelton rehabilitated Alexander in two interlocking ways: as an agent of human development in the context of imperialism, and, in a more direct answer to his previous critics, a monarch of civic worth. This was not about conceiving an empire in India, but accommodating a demand for a limited monarchy that better served its people. Alexander had been reinvented as a king espousing an ideology of conquest closely approximating that of the commercial British empire. As Briant argues, concern with securing, protecting and governing an empire of non-British citizens and justifying its aims certainly drew Alexander back to being a usable model at the end of the century. But the analysis of Alexander's legacy should not just focus on India or on the history of commerce. The same civic values that once destroyed his reputation contributed elsewhere to reframing Alexander as a figure of utility.

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[503] Ramsay *The Travels of Cyrus* (1728: 112-3) quoted in Ahn (2011: 429).

3.3. NEW MODEL HEROES

In section 3.2, Alexander was a paradigm for state and empire as a whole. A study of various *comparationes* with British heroes offers another, equally controversial route to Alexander becoming relevant for Britain's conception of self. In the examples that follow, an alternative narrative of Britain's relationship with imperialism is explored through the "heroes" that were expected to wield martial power, and exercise British rule, in the various locales of empire in the mid to late-eighteenth century.

Although Edward Young praised his commercial credentials, Robert Walpole's reticence to intervene against the maritime aggression of Britain's enemies caused widespread public dismay in the 1730s.[504] The complaints over the loss of ships and trade to European rivals, and over his policy of "accommodation", eventually provoked a declaration of war on Spain in 1739.[505] In comparison to Walpole's perceived insipid pursuit of the war, the hero in the estimation of the general public was Admiral Edward Vernon who defeated the Spanish at Porto Bello.[506] His extra-ordinarily widespread acclaim and the reciprocal censure of Walpole for not better protecting British interests, demonstrate two important attitudes towards heroes and empire evident towards the middle and second half of the century. First, commercial empire was widely accepted to be a zero-sum endeavour where trade was to be protected and gained through contest with other powers.[507] The emerging patriotic mercantilism of the 1730s, as Black has argued, aimed for the 'pursuit of maritime hegemony and imperial advantage' and underlined the importance of naval protection against rivals.[508] Empire was not to be an arena for cooperation, appeasement or just fighting to preserve

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[504] See Wilson 1998.
[505] *The War of Jenkins' Ear* which ended in 1748.
[506] A port in Panama.
[507] For instance, *The Expedition. An Ode* (1740), which argues for pursuing victory: 'Go forth, my Britons! Brave as free,/ Fix your Dominion o'er the Sea./ Heaven thron'd you Isle amid the guardian Waves/ While you the Trading Flood command/ Yours is the wealth of every Land'.
[508] Black 2004: 66.

one's own, as Young and Defoe had argued. Second, in keeping with the praise of Marlborough in Europe there was a desire to retain an aegis of British values in order to clearly separate the nation's heroes from other models of empire.[509] Like Marlborough protecting England from Louis, Vernon was claimed for liberty – in this case the freedom of British commercial interests abroad.[510] But as an admiral, Vernon did not have the direct connotations of tyranny that came with holding a continental army and he fitted snugly into ideologies that held maritime power to be in concert with liberty. The imperial conflicts of the mid-to-late century, however, would also require the celebration and damnation of powerful merchants and soldiers that made British writers reconsider their attitudes towards expansion and, increasingly, governance.

The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) against France in North America was an important moment for British heroes.[511] Perhaps the most celebrated hero of the war was Major-General Sir William Johnson. Benjamin West depicted him saving a defeated French soldier from being scalped by a Native American ally in the aftermath of an unknown skirmish.[512] In choosing this intimate tableau (rather than a mêlée) West's painting revisited the motif of the clement conduct of a general after battle. This type of scene was associated with Alexander's treatment of the family of Darius after the Battle of Issus or the defeated King Porus after the Battle of the Hydaspes.[513] It had

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[509] See *A British Philippic. A poem in Miltonic verse. Occasion'd by the Insults of the Spaniards, and the Preparations for War* (1738) which associates Britain with Liberty and Spain with tyranny.
[510] See Wilson 1998: 81-91.
[511] For example, by Bowen (1998a) who identifies the 1760s generally as a period of a swing to the east. This is not uncontroversial. Rodger argues that this began to change by 1762, and cites Black (1991: 55-6) as placing the turning point in the 1740s. A broad consensus emerges in Armitage (1999: 103; 2000), Bowen (1998a: 1-27), Marshall (1998b: 1-18) and Gould (2000). For the purposes of this chapter, I will take Seven Years War as the period after which increased significance of colonies and disorder of governments had an impact on the way in which Alexander was perceived, although as is highlighted below the processes that instigated a redemption of Alexander's repute as an empire builder have roots much earlier.
[512] Benjamin West's *General Johnson Saving the Life of a Wounded French Officer from the Tomahawk of a North American Indian* (1764-8), see Conlin (2004).
[513] Aside from the many famous depictions in art, Swift (1962: 83) had previously praised the most re-occurring pro-Alexander motif of virtue – the clemency shown towards Darius' family – in his list 'of those who have made great Figures in some particular Action or

been a popular theme in art with the former featuring in Paolo Veronese's *The Family of Darius before Alexander* (1565-7), while both scenes featured in Charles Le Brun's series of works on Alexander.[514] Fielding had caricatured this as a trivial act when set against Alexander's more monstrous crimes, and, indebted to Fielding's portrait of Jonathan Wild, an anonymous piece in the *Royal Magazine* (1759) noted that the famous scene 'was not an especially noble act: "every private man, and even a ruffian" would do the same if placed in a similar situation.'[515] In showing the correction of natives, Conlin notes, West echoed this sentiment, assuming that British soldiers would, as a matter of course, conduct themselves in imperial wars with restraint and prevent savagery in contrast with their primitive allies.[516] The theme of clemency was moved beyond the unique and memorable action of a famous ancient general to become the standard of British imperial conduct. Once cited as an anecdote in support of Alexander's superior character, this act of clemency showed that Britain could execute a victorious defence of empire whilst extending British values.[517]

The Seven Years' War also pushed to prominence General James Wolfe. He commanded British forces in the successful siege of Quebec (1759) but died close to the end of the battle. After the final British victory at the Plains of Abraham, Classical Literature was raided for apt comparisons. Prominent were republican and patriotic heroes and especially those who demonstrated a degree of self-sacrifice - Epaminondas, Hannibal, Cato, Leonidas and Hector. The use of Cato particularly associated the British triumph with liberty, keeping conquest and aggression in North America in concert with

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Circumstances of their Lives.' '[Alexander] when he entered the Tent where the Queen and the Princesses of Persia fell at his feet.

[514] Bapasola (2005) and Hartle (1957) for the popularity of such motifs in England and France.

[515] Quoted by Conlin (2004: 43).

[516] Conlin (2004: 53-6). He also argues that Adam Smith and Hume had similar concerns about the place of ancient morality. Conlin's equation of primitive with ancient morality is not convincing.

[517] Conlin 2004: 41-2.

ideals of a commercial and free empire.[518] Wilson has argued the character of Wolfe (and for that matter Johnson) allowed the nation joy in expansion, while retaining a sense of 'benevolent' imperialism and the demands of liberty.[519] The personal, as Rogers argues, 'achieved metonymic status within imperial discourses'; Britain was forging imperial heroes who incorporated military excellence and impeccable values. Previously Marlborough's attributes had to be carefully defined and clearly partitioned from that of his comparator. The new British heroes were a celebration of the British modes of both conquest *and* superior morality, so the public could feel comfortable with an empire of military force.[520]

After this conflict, as far as the example of Alexander demonstrates, it was more difficult for British expansion to be sequestered from the modes of conquest.[521] The war was the first of many circumstances that led to the realisation that conceptions of empire based upon liberty, Protestantism and trade did not map onto the new, more geographically and culturally complex construction.[522] The *Treaty of Paris* (1763) ended the war against France and confirmed Britain's hold on an empire of relatively large size and diversity spanning numerous West Indian territories and the North American continent.[523] In less than a decade, the sundering of the thirteen American colonies from British rule provoked a further reconsideration of the edifice that remained. Now undoubtedly also a land-empire, British territorial holdings had significantly rebalanced away from Protestant British settlers to

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[518] Rogers 2004: 245.
[519] Wilson 1994: 151.
[520] Rogers 2004: 239; Conlin 2004: 41-2.
[521] Marshall 2005: 7. Marshall (1998b: 7) notes 'For all its distortions of reality, the rhetoric of a peaceful dominion of the seas founded on liberty helped to consolidate an Atlantic empire at least for the first fifty years of the eighteenth century. It could not, however, survive the strains of the great wars of mid-century and the consequences that were to follow from success in war. A new conceptualisation of empire and a different set of imperial practices were to take its place.'
[522] As argued by Marshall (1998a: 4-5). Harlow (1952) initiated the argument that this was a turning point between the "First" and "Second" empires. Although the grand terms of thesis are now obsolete, Armitage (2000) and Marshall (2003) demonstrate further how this was, more narrowly, a seminal moment in British conceptions of empire.
[523] A change noted by Marshall (2005: 7).

encompass Catholics and, more importantly, vast populations of non-Christians and non-Europeans.[524] These latter groups were mainly in India and were incorporated within the British sphere of rule because of the rapid expansion of the East India Company.[525] After early gains in the 1680s, the Company had made little attempt to control territory outside of trading enclaves in Madras and Bengal.[526] Where the replacement of the Mughals was inconceivable, soon after the successful defeats of the French during the Seven Years' War, the company took advantage of local politics to negotiate a much greater reach, such as when the Company gained administrative responsibility for Bengal and Bihar in the 1760s.[527] In doing so, the mercantile company added administration of massive territory to its long standing commercial activity. The problem posed to politicians and critics was that this empire of mercantile imperialism demonstrably clashed with the values of a state that had been valorising a radically different project of empire only a few decades earlier.[528]

From the 1770s, a flood of publications on India accompanied an awareness of the contrast between an expanding empire of conquest and rule, and the ideologies that held to liberty and commercialism. This was exemplified by the discourse in the 1770s and 80s on governance that recognised that Company rule was conducted in a manner starkly different from current and former North American colonies.[529] For example, under the Company there was greater potential for expansion to be locally driven by dynamic individuals or for governance to be exploited for personal profit.[530] Ministers were concerned with the potential effects of rapacious local officers and Company policies were impeding mercantile gains.[531] In

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[524] See Marshall (1998b: 10) for the ethnic composition of the "new" empire.
[525] Marshall 2005: 182-196.
[526] Expansion from which seemed hardly conceivable or welcome for most of the eighteenth century - see Marshall (1998b: 2).
[527] See Mancke (2002: 243-6) and Marshall (1998b) for the conception of British rule in India.
[528] A dichotomy posed by Bowen (1998a: 20).
[529] Sen 2002: xiv; Nechtman 2010: 9-11; Flood 2006: 47-9.
[530] Marshall 2003: 4.
[531] See Bowen 1998b:540.

the early 1780s, the MP Henry Dundas was overseeing an investigation into sporadic conflicts with Indian potentiates that had been costly to British trade interests. He commented on the *ad hoc* militarism that sat uneasily with what he saw as the prime directive of Company rule - improvement of trade for the benefit of British investors - when he wrote,

> as matters stood, military exploits had been followed till commercial advantages were in danger of being lost... [no company servant had] the right to fancy he was Alexander, or an Aurengzebe, and prefer frantic military exploits to the improvement of the trade and commerce of the country.[532]

His concern with "petty" Alexanders was symtomatic of what Dundas perceived as the anti-commercialism of company rule in India.[533] The company was seen to exceed their mandate and to be acting with an ambition that was interfering with its commercial prerogatives. Dundas' passing rebuke is an insight into concerns with ambitious officials made using the predominant stereotype of self-interested and unproductive conquest. By the early eighties, various British governments had attempted to resolve these indiscretions by bringing the Company under closer supervision, for instance in Pitt's India Act of 1784.[534] In this passing example, Alexander still stood on the wrong side of British imperial ideology in Whitehall. But the form of involvement in India had brought some aspects

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[532] Henry Dundas April 1782 *Parliamentary Register*, VIII (1782) quoted in Bowen 1998b: 541. See Marshall (1998a) for broader recognition of the growing importance of India, alongside the problems of territorial control.

[533] As argued by Bowen (1998b: 546). As Mancke (2002) argues, the debate of the 1770s was predominantly about who had the right to exploit the lands conquered by the company for monetary reward. See Fry (1992: 111-5) for context for this speech.

[534] Company rule came under closer Whitehall scrutiny, under parliamentary control through a board of control (with Dundas at its head) which made it subject to a strong central executive in the form of a Governor-General in India. The foray into governance by the East India Company would ultimately see it drawn into closer supervision from the state and public and private debates upon the problems and prospects of holding an empire in India. Later in the decade the investigation running parallel was to be expanded and amplified in Burke's prosecution of misrule during the Hastings trial (which started in 1787 and ended with his acquittal in 1795) - Bowen (1998b: 541-5). Pitt's India Act of 1784 established a Board of Commissioners with Dundas president until 1801. See Marshall (2005: 201-2) for attitudes towards rule. See Marshall (1998b: 15) for creation of a strong executive.

of British imperial behaviour closer to that of the former conqueror of Asia. This made for some uncomfortable comparisons.[535]

Pitt's Act certainly did not end the controversy, nor did subsequent use of the analogy only draw upon the anti-commercial aspect of Alexander's repute.[536] The figure to whom the accusation of being a petty Alexander directly referred was the first Governor General of Bengal Warren Hastings.[537] Impeached in 1786 and put on trial in 1788, he was accused of various abuses of power during his time in India, with particular emphasis placed upon his exploitation of native Indian rulers.[538] His ally and strident defender in parliament was Lord Chancellor Edward Thurlow who had famously compared Hastings to Alexander. The comparison lingered as an occasional description in the legal proceedings, as well as in the accompanying public debate.[539] The comparison was picked up by Charles Edward Fox one of the lead prosecutors of the trial, and his speech was recorded in popular print.[540] There are at least two variants of the speech

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[535] Bowen 1998b: 549.

[536] In particular the controversy of Nabob's, although this is outside the scope of the current work – see Nechtman 2010.

[537] According to Bowen (1998b: 546).

[538] Flood (2006: 49) for a summary.

[539] Unfortunately the original speech has, so far, eluded me, but given the weight of *testimonia* in later writing its existence can be presumed. The image stuck and was used as his sobriquet in cartoons of the trial - see Dent (1788b). In addition to this and the three works discussed below, *The Triumphs of Administration. An Ode.* (1795: 116) records the comparison in rhyme: 'Sage Thurlow on the fact refines; And Alexander, Hastings shines!' and clarifies in the accompanying footnote that points to the general tone of the piece: 'Lord Thurlow declared in the House of Lords, in his panegyrical oration on Mr. Hastings, that of all modern heroes he most resembled Alexander the Great.' It is expected that the few works discussed and cited here form only part of a much wider association between the two in visual and textual forms and will provide the basis of fruitful further research.

[540] Fox (1788: 245) provides an alternative: 'I have heard that from such authority [Lord Thurlow] it has been said there might possibly be some resemblance, and that it has been attempted to draw a parallel between Alexander the Great and the prisoner at the bar. I confess there is some resemblance; but it must be in Alexander's case when intoxicated; when he had the vanity to suppose himself a God and not a man; when, in the heat of a debauch, he set fire to a town to gratify his feelings at the moment ; when, in a debauch, at the moment of rage, in fury and corruption, he did those acts which cast a shade upon all his conquests, and made it doubtful whether now he is more to be reserved for the great acts he performed or detested for those disgraceful actions of which in those circumstances he was guilty. In that view I see a resemblance between these two persons.

existing, which are subtly different in emphasis, but agree on the core analogy. The following was recorded by Debrett:

> Mr Hastings has lately been compared to a conqueror, whose fame filled the universe.... [Lord Thurlow] had assimilated Warren Hastings to Alexander the Great. But if any resemblance were found, it could not be to Alexander when his mercies and his victories kept an equal pace; - it could not be to the generous or forgiving conqueror;- the likeness must be meant to Alexander maddened after a debauch... to Alexander when his follies and his crimes had excited horror and contempt sufficient to obscure the radiance of his former glories. In the first points of the comparison there was not a shade of resemblance; in the latter was all the justice that could be required.[541]

This is the Alexander of Lee and Dryden, hubristic and unable to control his passions, using the mixed character assessment that placed Alexander in credit for the first half of his career, but held that his later career exhibited crimes.[542] Vasunia has shown that when Edmund Burke (the lead prosecutor) cited Virgil he wished to 'caution against untrammeled empire' and the 'violent corruption of the East India Company.'[543] Alexander offered a blunt allegory in this regard. The allusion further pertained to a specific location (Asia), while tainting Hastings' actions with the whiff of criminal madness.

Similarly, the analogy worked as a crude contrast to a vision of Britain's empire in keeping with civic virtues.[544] Why Hastings was a dangerous phenomenon is more garishly explained in a cartoon printed on the 28th of

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[541] *The history of the trial of Warren Hastings* 1796: 16.

[542] Given the variants of the speeches, these cannot be taken as an accurate record of Fox's wording, but that he must have made some reference to Alexander's degeneration (on which the two speeches agree). A full discussion of the function of the speeches with respect to the trial itself is deferred in lieu of more certain attribution and research into the rhetoric of the prosecution, but they still warrant noting as evidence of the blunt characterisation of Hastings. The analysis here therefore seeks to understand how Alexander resounded in popular conception. For the allusion more generally, see *The history of the trial of Warren Hastings* (1796: 280) for MP Randal Jackson comparing Hastings' and Alexander's fame both being constructed on the basis of 'great and splendid actions.'

[543] Vasunia 2009: 91-3.

[544] Vasunia 2009: 93.

February two weeks after the trial began (see Fig. 1).[545] Entitled *Alexander the Great conquering all the world* (1788), Warren Hastings is portrayed in 'oriental' dress, pouring riches from his hat - an 'oriental' cornucopia - into the globed chest of 'Thurlow', whose body is labeled for various parts of the world. Thurlow exclaims 'Lack a day how you distress me.' In Hastings' belt are an axe, a halter, possibly two clubs and almost certainly the handle of a dagger; all are tied with a sash marked with the term 'virtues.'[546] The image exploits a number of key aspects of Alexander's repute to characterise Hastings' actions. First, as a European dressed as an Asian potentiate, he recalls Alexander's Persianisation.[547] The "Nabobs" (of which Hastings was the foremost example) were men that made considerable fortunes in the Company service and were perceived to have done this through adopting oriental habits of arbitrary rule, dress, wealth and luxury.[548] From the late 1760s, their actions had provoked great controversy based upon the fear that as they had been despotic in India, on return they would bring with them their arbitrary practices and luxurious modes.[549] The distress at home is not being directly evoked, but since this oriental potentate was armed with the accoutrements of his 'virtue,' his methods of collecting wealth for Britain certainly were. This pun on the term 'lakhs' particularly evoked the most notorious charge of the trial, when Hastings was accused of helping the Nawab of Oudh to force his grandmother and mother (The Begums of Oude)

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[545] Dent 1788a. Very little is known about William Dent the engraver. A browse through his responses to the trial exposes a desire to satirise both contending parties and highlight the waste of money. He had attacked Burke previously in *Impeachment* - Dent 1786.

[546] The composition is not clear enough to be certain of the clubs and dagger.

[547] An analogy only discussed briefly here. The correspondence between Alexander as a Persianiser and the Nabob culture in general is a topic worthy of more detailed research. The riches of the orient was a standard dress for Hastings as portrayed by Dent, for example Dent (1787a) for the trial as the *Battle of Hastings. Bella Horrida bella.* There were even concerns that Hastings has bribed King George using similar imagery in *The Wise Man of the East Making his offering* – Dent (1787b).

[548] Nechtman 2010: chapt. 3.

[549] Vasunia (2009: 90-1) links issues of corruption and arbitrary power to a broader concern with the decline and fall of Britain. How this pertained to Alexander's use in the trial of Hastings requires further research.

to reimburse a debt to the Company.[550] Britain's imperial riches were shown to have been collected at the point of a sword.[551]

Figure 1.

A case in defence of Hastings using Alexander was mounted in print at the beginning of February. A substantial tract attributed to John Logan (1747/8–1788), minister and writer, entitled *A Review of the Principal charges*

[550] Flood 2006: 50.

[551] This is a preliminary reading. The meaning of Thurlow's words is not fully apparent to me at this stage. It may well refer to a particular speech in the trial. Similarly the significance of the labeled parts of his dress is not entirely clear.

against Warren Hastings Esquire, Late Governor General of Bengal (1588) cited, in part, the special circumstances faced by those in power in India.[552] Logan felt Hastings' administration was 'splendid and successful', and he held that he had been accused with 'tyranny and oppression'. In order to offset the charge of despotism Logan charged Hastings' prosecutors with placing 'vindication of the national character' above 'public interest'. His rebuttal intended to show Hastings' prosecutors were placing his great services to the nation below the spurious (but serious) claim that Hastings' had impugned British honour and integrity.[553] The specific charge of demanding five lacks of rupees from the Zamindar of Benares was mitigated because the money was needed to fight against an opposition confederacy.[554] Similarly, to refute the charge that Hastings had extorted money from the Begum of Oude, an initial argument was constructed on the basis that the Begum had been involved in an uprising, justifying the seizure.[555] The argument is developed further noting that

> the situation of our affairs in the East rendered them [the proceedings against the Begum] not only expedient but necessary. In every form of government, even the most free, a discretionary and despotic power must sometimes be exercised. There are critical periods in human affairs, when a strict conformity to the letter of the law may endanger the safety of the nation and the existence of the state. In such situations it is given in charge to the supreme executive power, *"Ne quid detrimenti respublica capiat."* Political necessity, like self-preservation, supersedes all laws.[556]

The extreme circumstances of a 'critical' military situation faced by the British, therefore allowed Hastings to take the despotic action required for the sake of the republic. As it lists the strategic threats and financial penury

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[552] [Logan] 1788. Although he died in this year, it does cite other works by Logan ([Logan] 1788: 59) and uses some of the same publishers as Logan 1787.
[553] Charges that were politically motivated in the opinion of the author [Logan] (1788: 4, 6-8).
[554] [Logan] 1788: 16-20.
[555] [Logan] 1788: 23-4.
[556] Caes. *BCiv*. 1.5. The formulation of what later became known as *senatus consultum ultimum* which begins with *videant consules*... (full translation: "let the consuls see to it that the state suffers no harm").

of the Company and its army at the time, the work cites the seizure as crucial to preventing India from being 'lost to this empire'.[557] To emphasis the specific requirements for actions taken without concern for laws and liberty, the author seeks a parallel:

> To understand our affairs in India, we must seek for a parallel, not in modern, but in ancient history, when a conquering army was supplied by the cities and provinces through which it marched. In that quarter of the globe we cannot borrow millions, upon the strength of taxes, which throw a burden on remotest posterity.[558]

In contrast to Barbon's assessment of the modes of European empires, the Indian subcontinent was appropriate (perhaps ripe) for ancient, land-style conquest, one where expediency could be placed above respect for local property. He continues, emphasising the precarious nature of Britain's Indian holdings: 'Our dominions in India must be preserved by the extended arm; danger must be repelled, and destruction averted, by the exertions of the moment; and he who starts at accusation, or shrinks from responsibility, will lose a distance province.' The men who demure at the prospect of a trial for impropriety are conceived as a liability in such circumstances; it is only thanks to men like Hastings who can operate with 'responsibility' that the empire can be secured. He brings the argument against the charge to a climax with the claim that

> there are seasons in which every eastern conqueror, like Alexander the Great, must cut the Gordian knot with the sword; and when the duration of empire depends upon the hour, it may be lawful, and even meritorious, to invade a Zenana or plunder a Mosque.[559]

Logan was acutely aware of the coincidence of place (East) and person (the archetypical Indian conqueror), as he argues for Alexander's type of conquest being a necessary course of action. The author claims that empire in

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[557] [Logan] 1788: 27-30.
[558] [Logan] 1788: 30.
[559] [Logan] 1788: 30-1.

India requires men like Alexander who are prepared to commit justifiable acts of tyranny to maintain the health of the republic.[560]

The difference between Hastings' *comparatio* and previous instances involving Alexander during the eighteenth century was that he was a figure being hastily pushed *out* of the British tent by his enemies. As Vasunia argues, there was a palpable sense that 'Britain's very mode of being an imperial power was on trial', and this discourse refreshed disparate parts of Alexander's complex legacy.[561] Logan argued that "crimes" of conquest could be rationalised under the rubric of necessity and place. In an addendum to the argument on the Begums, the author notes that affairs like that of the Begum were far from rare, but 'almost universal in the East'.[562] Hastings could act despotically, given that India was a place where Alexander's methods *had* to be used.[563] In trying to separate the accepted modes of justice from imperial necessities, Logan showed exactly how values of nation and actions of empire were clashing. Fox, Dent and the scandal itself reveal a tension coming from the knowledge that Alexander's methods were very much in danger of becoming British ones, since British values could be undermined by arbitrary Nabobs in parliament or impugned by Hastings' schemes of aggrandisement in Bengal.[564] As Britain's empire moved closer to Machiavelli's *grandezza*, the trial of this petty Alexander had shown that there were concerns that republican virtues had been abandoned due to imperial necessity.

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[560] Published circa the beginning of February according to Fox's speech in the house on the 14th of February during which he moved to prosecute the publisher of the pamphlet for its supposed libelous accusations – see 'Mr Fox's Complaint of a Pamphlet respecting the Impeachment against Mr. Hastings" in Fox (1815: 363-8). The Printer James Stockdale was later acquitted of the charge.

[561] Vasunia 2009: 91.

[562] [Logan] 1788: 32.

[563] Logan (1787: 26) for example draws attention to Alexander's adopted theocratic government as being intrinsic to 'warmer climates.' Similarly, he notes that 'Alexander the Great, whose policy was equal to his ambition, in imitation of the Oriental monarchs, when he meditated the conquest of the Eastern World, assumed a divine original, and was recognized as the son of Jove.'

[564] Concomitantly the controversies of the 1780s brought fears that Britain was closely matching the stereotypical despotic empires of the Mughals, Ottomans and their predecessors.

3.4. AFTERWORD

Alexander was evidently controversial as a comparator for the methods and nature of Britain's agents of conquest and rule. Even when his example was cited to explain away the actions of Hastings, it was done in pragmatic terms, as the necessary evils of governing amidst the economic and cultural particularities of an Indian empire. If Hastings' still illuminated Alexander's flaws, by the 1790s, Robertson also redeemed him through his vision for a commercial empire. Having a justifiable end for his singular ambition meant that insatiable conquests or murders could now be contextualised by a world-improving goal. An obscure account by Thomas Beddoes, a chemist, entitled *Alexander's Expedition down the Hydaspes & the Indus to the Indian Ocean* (1792), demonstrates further both the effects of Robertson's thesis and the reaction to the controversy of the Nabobs. Using mainly the account of Arrian, it leaned heavily on the 'hope' given to India by Alexander's ideals and is explicitly indebted to Robertson's *Disquisition*.[565] Beddoes - like Robertson and Lyttelton – was keen to give Alexander praise for his vision beyond conquest. He also explicitly reprised Alexander as a great man in comparison to his British successors.

The prologue argued that Alexander – like other 'great men' – should be treated as a figure existing outside of his time, a consequence of his 'exquisite' sensibility and talent.[566] A bold assertion of genius required explanation of the 'excesses' of conquest - acutely pertinent given the trial of Hastings - that were synonymous with Alexander. Beddoes' apologia was based upon the notion that the standard to which Alexander was expected to meet was unsavoury to contemporary readers. Beddoes argues that there are figures like Alexander with

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[565] Beddoes 1792: v, vii, 3, 4, 19 and passim. He was explicitly inspired by the famous map of Hindostan by Major Rennell - see Briant (2005) for Rennell and Robertson.

[566] Beddoes (1792: 4) notes that Alexander 'stands honourably distinguished among conquerors by his eager thirst as well as liberal encouragement of science; his character is 'the romantic traveller ... blended with the adventurous soldier.' He continues arguing that 'by whatever object they were touched, the springs of his nature bent deeply inwards, but they immediately rebounded with equal energy of action.'

> the independence of mind, which would not blindly submit even to an Aristotle; and those extraordinary projects by which he sometimes aspired to praise according to the false standard of excellence then established, as well as those equally magnificent designs, which exceeded the comprehension of his age. Thus, his genius was doubtless, great. But his birth and times determined its mode of exertion.[567]

Rather than being to blame for his destructive actions, Alexander's character was subverted by ancient poetry (namely the Iliad and its hero Achilles). In the ancient world this had framed the 'moral sentiments of mankind' and accounted for Alexander's moral template.[568] Rather than use this difference to place contemporary values and heroes above those of Alexander, the man and his mind were seen as untouchable.

Yet the defence was twofold. His intellectual 'independence', Beddoes argues, also provoked the ability to transcend his age and its most famous teacher. After the apologia, the poem provided a platform for these audacious visions. The king of Macedon is envisaged upon the prow of a ship travelling down the Indus as the locals watched from the river banks in terror and awe. Building upon the commentary of Robertson, Beddoes has Alexander exclaim his wonderment at India, its landscape and its ancient civilisation, with scientific and intellectual pursuits that predated 'western' attempts.[569] Beddoes has Alexander reveal the extent and character of his plans for empire as he predicts:

> "When every clime shall see my flag unfurled,
> And boundless Commerce mix a cultured world,
> From mad misrule reclaimed, and brutal strife,
> Trained to the soft civilities of life"[570]

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[567] Beddoes 1792: v. Beddoes also notes the inter-changeability of great thinkers with the example that Newton could have been a great poet.
[568] Beddoes 1792: 39.
[569] Beddoes 1792: 19-20.
[570] Beddoes 1792: 23- 4.

In the poem and the accompanying notes, Beddoes quashes the charge of 'Madness' made by Pope and reinforces the commercial Alexander of Montesquieu and Robertson. Unlike Montesquieu, Beddoes cites India as the wellspring for his empire and, rather than Alexandria, makes the country the centre of governance.

In grasping the potential of India, Alexander discovers the lynchpin in his commercialist plan.[571] Under this schema, Beddoes envisages an India refreshed by commerce, the cure to all the country's ills:

> Lo! In redundant current, Commerce pours,
> Obedient to thy call, her Eastern stores;
> And Still, though Plague and Rapine range the land,
> Her spicy bale perfumes thy chosen strand.[572]

Later Alexander is seen to smile with satisfaction at the intercontinental reach of his trading empire and the accrual of its benefits.[573] The ensuing empire, furthermore, would be a uniting force under the guidance of a humane ruler:

> And oh! Had years matured the fair design,
> Of which thy genius traced the wondrous line;
> Had General Concord, from her finished sane,
> Shed her pure light, and breathed her strains humane,
> [...]
> Stern Scythia's clans had cast their rage aside,
> Unsocial Greece renounced her scornful price;
> And long, beneath thy star's protecting ray,
> Had bloomed the regions of the rising day;[574]

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[571] Beddoes 1792: 25: 'When Home's dear ties shall fix each roaming horde; And Earth shall kneel before her Grecian Lord; Here shall my arms be hung - in this retreat; My age repose – here fix its silent seat.'
[572] Beddoes 1792: 23-9.
[573] Beddoes 1792: 44. He continues: 'Thy treasures, Ganges, to the strands of Nile, Delighted Fancy prompts the unconscious smile; Poured from her urn, soft streams of feeling flow, Diffusing purer bliss than palms bestow.' This argues that he feels greater satisfaction at the thought of trade than of victories.
[574] Beddoes 1792: 29-30.

The moment when the fleet passes from India to the sea, before the host turns to begin the trip back to Greece – from which Alexander was never to return – is when the celebratory tone gives way to a paean to what might have been. Beddoes argues that his premature death condemned this vision to be forgotten, and that this was an opportunity missed for India:

> To her scared eye, a Fate's dark leaves disclose
> The ghastly characters of India's woes,
> Thy parting sail, o king, the pensive Muse
> With many a sigh, down Indus' stream, pursues.
> Large was thy thought, and liberal was thy soul,
> Nor stooped thy glance beneath bright Honour's goal;
> Beyond the Sage's amplest grasp, thy mind
> Embraced the mighty mass of human kind,
> And spurned, with firm disdain, the barbarous rule,
> Framed by the Founder of the subtle School. –
> Where awful History, mid the dome of Fame,
> Awards the Tyrant's and the Conqueror's shame,
> Humanity's mild voice, still raised for THEE,
> Abates the rigour of her stern decree.[575]

Though works of history and the various *atria* of fame picked out the negative aspects to memorialise, the humanity of Alexander is recognised by Beddoes in his disdain for Aristotle's famous advice upon ruling over barbarians rather than Greeks.[576] Citing Robertson, Beddoes insists that his respectful treatment of the natives 'must have been the originality of Alexander's genius', putting this trait down to 'the enlargement of his conceptions and the equity of his mind, whenever ambition did not interfere with the latter quality'.[577] The message is clear: India had missed the ruler it deserved.

The citation of Aristotle's advice and Robertson's commentary on India served to make an explicit parallel with the rulers with which India had been

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[575] Beddoes 1792: 28.
[576] Plut. *De. Alex.Fort.* 1.6. He is said to have advised 'to treat the Greeks as if he were their leader, and other peoples as if he were their master.'
[577] Beddoes 1792: 25.

encumbered. The notes and appendices of the poem surpass the ostensible function of informing those unaware of the latest 'Hindu writings'. Instead they offer an extended critique of British rule in India.[578] Beddoes constantly addressed the theme of despotism, starting with his estimation of the manner in which foreign rule of India was suppressive of the venal local population. The cure was the removal of foreign powers:

> The moral character of the Hindoos can never begin to improve, if it needs improvement, till the last hour of their merciless tyrants from Europe shall arrive. And then perhaps they will only experience a change of tyrants.[579]

Beddoes sought to destroy the façade of commercialism because he saw it masking the tyranny of Company rule in India:

> In the estimation of a Despot it is true, the life of a man is of small estimations; and if this observation is more particularly true of Asiatic Despots, it is only because their power is more uncontrolled.[580]

Any claimed dissimilitude between company rule and those they replaced in India is considered to be a false dichotomy. Despotism, whether of commercial intent or not, was still despotic:

> Let us therefore join in execrating despotism in all its forms and degrees, whether mercantile or monarchical, but if we would be at all equitable, we cannot wonder, that an Asiatic despot should as little respect the lives and persons of Europeans as of Asiatics: though doubtless every state ought to protect its citizens against his capricious or deliberate cruelties.[581]

This characterisation credited Alexander as a figure who could have been excused for despotism given the manners of his era. The wolves of British

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[578] A full discussion of which exceeds the scope of the current chapter. The notes substantially dwarf the poem in size and detail, giving detailed references for the locations and events covered in the poem, source material (especially Arrian) and also contemporary occurrences.
[579] Beddoes 1792: 13.
[580] Beddoes 1792: 89.
[581] Beddoes 1792: 89.

imperialism that hid despotism under a veneer of commerce stand in comparison to his enlightened plans for India, perhaps directly evoking Hastings. Beddoes 'laments the extension of territory in India as a heavy calamity' and predicts that the victories will mean ruin even if they garnered some profit. England will suffer the same decline as Portugal, Holland and Spain. To Beddoes commercial empires will inevitably come under attack from others and suffer the same fate as their forebears:

> Or shall we vainly flatter ourselves that Commerce can be so dotingly fond of one particular country, that no outrage shall expel her? She and her attendant Properity have never yet fixed their residence long in the tents of the rapacious and the bloodthirsty.

Recalling the critiques of Spain and Alexander earlier in the century, it is moral opprobrium that is predicted to cause the corruption of the republic before external forces finish it off. In citing this future, Beddoes connects the current empire of commerce with values that were clearly associated with conquest, and exemplified by Alexander, earlier in the century. Alexander himself was excused such criticisms on two counts. First, he was conditioned to behave in such a manner by his contemporary *mores*. Second, he managed to lift himself above the despotic and destructive inclinations of his contemporaries – *and his British successors* - by his genius. Like Roberston, Beddoes demonstrates that his imperial paradigm had come full circle. He was a paragon of liberty and humanism set against a British despotism with the uncomfortable "blood and guilt" of universal land empire.[582]

The return of Alexander to Babylon and to his death, as imagined by Beddoes, meant that India missed out upon an epoch-shaping government, but his hero still returned amidst joyful celebration to enjoy a victorious carouse. This final scene was set with the use of Homeric imagery and the trappings of a Roman triumph:

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[582] I am evoking Paterson - see chapter 3.1, p.129. Although it is probable that Beddoes' work was viewed by few (if any) of the general reading public, its value is in the way in which it shows the effects of Robertson's analysis of India and the controversy of Hastings' trial.

Then to the clamours of barbarian tongues
Yields the glad symphony, and choral songs;
With zeal impatient as they hail from far,
High towering mid the hosts, the Conqueror's car.
Still from her crowded gates the CITY-train
Gush struggling on, and deluge o'er the plain,
Where streamers chequer o'er martial blaze
And Joy and Wonder mix their throbbing tides;[583]

Alexander was expressly mitigated by the overarching goals of conquest and Beddoes revels in the pomp or the sheer spectacle of conquest. Evocative of the mode given to Alexander in the descriptions of the chambers of fame or opera at the beginning of the century, the poem presents the glory of the victorious return, where the only category for acclaim is potency in war:

They mark the leaders of the war advance,
With reverent awe survey, the sons of fame,
And busy whispers buzz each honoured name.
As nearer now the car-imperial draws,
Hushed Expectation holds her stillest pause;
And, as the world's young Victor passes by.

The last image of the retiring party is a toast to the warrior, as typified by the final Homeric image: 'And little bosoms pant for martial toils; Pierce the stern foe, and strip his blood-stained spoils'.[584] This was not victory and pomp granted through the protection of liberty – as argued in praise of William III or George I - but a celebration of ancient heroism. Acting as a corrective to Britain, Alexander was also redeemed by the comparison.

Robertson and Beddoes were far from typical in their view on British rule in India. A pro-Company account in the *Asiatic Register* for 1799 supported the current regime, on the basis that British rule was returning a once magnificent civilisation to the ancestral condition it had once enjoyed.[585]

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[583] Beddoes 1792: 51.
[584] Beddoes 1792: 8.
[585] *The Asiatic annual register, or, A view of the history of Hindustan and of the politics, commerce and literature of Asia, for the year 1799* (1801). The list of subscribers ran to seven pages and

From Hastings onwards, the British had set about researching and then restoring to their "ancient" state what they perceived to be the ancestral laws and religious customs of India. This was a way of setting British rule on a sound legal basis, mitigating concerns regarding the autocratic culture that had been played out in the 1780s and 90s, and distinguishing the British from the previous regimes perceived to be despotic.[586] The contrast with the Marathas and Mughals is stated clearly in the preface, with the current regime depicted as acting 'not less for their own benefit, than for that of their rulers'.[587] The principal means of such equitable reconstitution is portrayed as the catalyst of commerce:

> instead of being wasted in the support of unprincipled and destructive wars, [India] is nourished in the bosom of commerce, to secure that peace and happiness of nations: and, above all, we behold the immeasurable resources of the most fertile region of the world at the command of the British Legislature, and employed, by the consummate wisdom and enlightened policy of the Great Statesman who administers the affairs of India, at once to increase the wealth and maintain the freedom of Britain.[588]

Commerce in India would create a mutually beneficial relationship with Britain and the rest of the world.[589] To establish the place of India as a wellspring for human happiness, the work provided an assessment of its previous history. For the period predating Alexander's campaigns the main thrust of the thesis is that the continent that Alexander encountered was saturated with the wares of India. It was Indian goods that were fought over

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included the Prince of Wales, Arthur Wellesley and Henry Dundas. Published in London March 8, 1800.

[586] Metcalf 1993: 9-13.

[587] *The Asiatic annual register, or, A view of the history of Hindustan and of the politics, commerce and literature of Asia, for the year 1799* (1801: 2).

[588] *The Asiatic annual register, or, A view of the history of Hindustan and of the politics, commerce and literature of Asia, for the year 1799* (1801: Xiii – Xiv).

[589] *The Asiatic annual register, or, A view of the history of Hindustan and of the politics, commerce and literature of Asia, for the year 1799* (1801: 1) 'It is necessary to look back to the ancient state of that country, to observe the unchangeable character of its inhabitants, to shew the nature and spirit of its religion...and to trace the rise of the commercial intercourse which subsisted between it and the nations of Europe.'

and captured at Tyre and Babylon**.** Reimagining Defoe's argument, the author showed it was not the Indians themselves who are the progenitors but the dynamic commercial outsiders. Instead it was

> the Phenicians, [who] first opened the navigation between the Red Sea and the shores of Guzerat and Malabar. Through these channels the opulence of the east flowed in upon Egypt and Greece, from the same exhaustless fountains that now supply the vast stream of commerce which spreads riches and luxury over modern Europe.[590]

It is the subcontinent that ultimately serves as the tapped source of prosperity, and although the author does not determine whether Egypt or India made the first advances in civilisation, the important point is that both and Europe derived huge benefits from the intercourse.

Alexander is not personally criticised, but the piece argues that he left officers who succumbed to corruption.[591] The effect of Alexander's conquests is stifling and it is only with Chandra Gupta that trade - 'which the Macedonian conquest had interrupted and almost destroyed' - is restored in concert with Seleucus.[592] The work adopts the same premise as Robertson's about the power of conquerors of India – that they could play a significant role in changing the commerce of the world. In this instance, it is not

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[590] *The Asiatic annual register, or, A view of the history of Hindustan and of the politics, commerce and literature of Asia, for the year 1799* (1801: 11).

[591]*The Asiatic annual register, or, A view of the history of Hindustan and of the politics, commerce and literature of Asia, for the year 1799* (1801: 17). On his successors it notes: the 'surest, if not the speediest means of effecting their destruction. The death of Alexander, which happened about this time, together with the subsequent division of his empire, greatly facilitated their views, and hastened the downfall of the Grecian power in Hindustan: the feeble remnants; These officers, loaded with wealth and honours, soon lost the vigour by which they had acquired and could alone support them; and, forgetful of the glories they had won, as well as of those sentiments which feed and sustain the generous pride of the soldier, they gave way to every corruption and debauchery to which vice can stimulate the passions of men. Mutual animosities and intestine broils were the inevitable consequences of this shameless depravity.'

[592] *The Asiatic annual register, or, A view of the history of Hindustan and of the politics, commerce and literature of Asia, for the year 1799* (1801: 18). On the admiration of Chandra Gupta : 'A treaty was therefore speedily concluded between them: the Greek [Seleucus] renounced all right to the conquests of Alexander on the east bank of the Indus; and the Indian[Chandra Gupta], who contended for nothing more, returned to his capital amidst the applause and gratitude of his subjects.'

Alexander who was the hero. In a form that is reminiscent of Defoe's criticism, his regime fails to add value to the empire that it replaced. Accepting the realities of land empire and using the knowledge and focus of Indian history both unavailable and irrelevant to Defoe, an India ruled by the commercial British is predicted to become the wellspring of pan-continental commerce.

3.5. CONCLUSION

The texts in chapter two were concerned with removing the values of ancient conquerors from the vocabulary of British virtue. Supporters of Walpole, for example, may have resisted the particular parallel, but they could not deny the Alexander was "Other" to national interests. This was a consequence of military figures invoking the spectre of tyranny: Alexander did not belong in a nation that avowed liberty and had no will to expand on land. Although still concerned with the preservation of liberty and avoidance of tyranny at home and abroad, the texts considered in chapter three had to deal with the consequences of the imbrication of conquest in domestic and foreign politics. In contrast to the comparative stability of attitudes towards conquerors in the works considered in chapter two, the works of the current chapter grappled with the demands of the disparate physical and intellectual spaces of empire, balanced values against the necessity of profit and even survival, and had to accommodate a dynamic and evolving imperial polity. The result was a far more complex and ambivalent take on Alexander.

From the Glorious Revolution until the French wars of the 1790s, a crucial means of forming British identity was the imaginary of the concept of a "British" empire and its corresponding "Other(s)".[593] Kathleen Wilson has described how "dichotomous notions of difference" or conceptual association with, and disassociation from, other empires, allowed British

[593] Pluralised here to indicate that empire was never an uncontested term nor was there a monolithic agreement of what constituted a British ideology of empire.

expansion to be contextualised in the eighteenth century.[594] For example, Linda Colley argues for a profound oppositional relationship with France in forming a sense of the 'British' collective.[595] The example of Alexander confirms that notions of Britishness were heavily reliant on distancing British virtue and empire from those of other empires. A historical personage like Alexander did not inform identity through the same urgent, Manichean struggle that meant France would have a binding effect upon the nation. Yet from the point when it was not apparent that Britain would survive as a Protestant kingdom in the post-Revolution world, to when it was flourishing as a land empire in India, Alexander was an obvious, palpable and persistent model for an empire of land conquest.

How this model related to Britain's sense of self was far from consistent. Wilson asserts that Britain's imperial encounters were 'unsettling' in a way that produced a 'precarious sense of self'.[596] As an encounter of a different kind - with past forms of imperialism – Alexander's paradigm was similarly neither unnerving nor comforting. Over the course of the century, his paradigm sat initially across from Britain, but eventually it straddled

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[594] Wilson (2004: 3-4) argues for the awareness of dichotomies of 'difference' against 'affiliation' and an 'Other' versus 'Self' when British imperial identity was constructed.

[595] Colley (2003: 6) argues that 'They came to define themselves as a single people not because of any political or cultural consensus at home, but rather in reaction to the other beyond their shores.' This was because of some obvious perceived differences: Britain was Protestant, under parliamentary rule, commercial, 'free'; France was Catholic, absolutist, non-commercial, tyrannical etc. See Akça Ataç (2006) for the use of Athens as a powerful and popular model of a non-tyrannical, sea power, empire, Turner (1986) for the British relationship with Republican Rome in the eighteenth century and Vlassopoulos (2010) more generally. Studies on the reception of ancient Rome and Greece have recently refreshed how interaction with the ancient past informed empire. Akça Ataç (2006: 643) has argued, for instance, that a more complete account of a British conception of empire in the eighteenth century requires ancient Greece, in particular Athens and Sparta, to be considered alongside Rome as an 'alternative' means of qualifying imperial attitudes or 'grounded in the belief that ancient history offered universal rules for establishing balance and enduring order under varying political circumstances, these histories of Ancient Greece cover a wide range of topics, from party politics, elections, from ideal governance, to the conduct of empire.' This is to add to the widely acknowledged link with Rome as, for example, explored by Turner (1986). To this must be added the relationship with the Persian monarchy, which offered both the instructive legacy of Cyrus in the early-modern period, idealised as a monarch by Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, and the criticism of Darius maintained in parallel with the narrative of Alexander's campaigns.

[596] See Wilson 2004: 3-4. On the basis of religion, commercialism, and constitution and in opposition to France and Spain.

difference and filiation. Corresponding to the debates upon civic virtue and utility seen in the previous chapter, the early-eighteenth-century texts regarding the ideology of empire paint him as clearly different to the morality and methods of Britain's expansion. Set against an empire of commerce and liberty, his sheer, selfish "uselessness" as a land conqueror transferred to bolster a self-regarding notion of the unique nature of Britain's empire. The seminal British heroes of empire (Marlborough included) were clearly partitioned from his example. Work on Republican Rome or Athens, clearly shows the continual use of the past according to factionalism tended to closely match political persuasions. Alexander was initially a closer figure to an agreed upon, anti-patriotic, "Other" in the early century.[597]

The examples in sections 3.3 and 3.4 show how the dichotomy between sea-power and land-empire suffered significant slippage. By the 1790s and especially after the defeat of France in 1815, Nicolas Barbon's vision had been fulfilled in terms of scale. But the envisaged sea-empire was deposed by a far more diverse and ideologically problematic edifice. From roughly the Seven Years' War onwards, a simple association-disassociation model does not describe aptly the disruption of the arms-length relationship. By the end of the century, the values that were previously associated with Alexander's conquests were present in Britain's own empire. They were problematized (as shown by the Hastings trial) and also accepted as part of a "new" idealism. Robertson and Beddoes could envisage a land-empire of commercial utility.

Alexander also stands as an example of the constantly fraught nature of paradigms pertaining to identity. As the realities and self-perceptions of Britain's empire changed, Alexander's paradigm was not a constant. The role of genre and the application of British values to changing circumstances were significant in driving this process. The concept of utility was adapted and redefined in response to the need to understand the role of commerce at

[597] Although the use by Fielding shows he was not immune from factional attention.

home and abroad, while historical works placed Alexander's conquests within a long-term view on human development. Alexander emerged as a "useful" world-improver, using the same broad criteria that had once judged him harshly against the demands of civic virtue. Briant's work has teased out the French–Scottish Enlightenment influence on the visionary Alexander. But there is a much wider untapped context for this evolution. There is great value to be had in placing these authors in the context of both the seventeenth century and the discourses on empire and civic society in the early century. When seeking the genesis for the reinvention of Alexander, future research should look to Defoe and De Saint-Pierre and their typologies of progress. Even if they did not recognise his methods as being world-improving or liberty-protecting, the identification of commercial development as an important locale for utility, established a premised later used by works that praise Alexander.

By the late century, various versions of Alexander's paradigm would interact with multiple visions of Britain's empire in India. In discussing the 'respect' that Robertson held for the country, Pierre Briant notes how Robertson wished to appeal against the kind of despotic excesses for which Hastings ostensibly stood trial.[598] In Robertson's opinion the example of Alexander served to point Britain towards conqueror with a sense of respect and who collaborated with his subjects to 'bring them progress and prosperity.' Regarding the conception of Britain's problematic empire, Black has argued that writers on civic humanism and the later Romantics, like Shelley and Byron, used imperial Rome 'around which to discuss and resonate their anxieties about the effects of empire upon metropolitan culture.'[599] This was because unlike the empire in North America there was no ethnic unity to rule in India and it was clearly imperial. For Robertson and

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[598] Briant 2005: 8.

[599] Black (2004: 143) notes that "the gain of an Indian-based Oriental Empire from the 1750s encouraged comparisons with imperial Rome because, unlike Britain's North American Empire, but like that of imperial Rome, the new British Empire in India had no ethnic underpinning and was clearly imperial. Writers in the tradition of civic humanism and, later, Romantic writers such as Byron, Shelley, and de Quincey, searched for points of reference."

Beddoes, Alexander was a figure who could tie together commercial empire and a sense of paternalism for the local population without the heavier overtones of territorial imperialism. The self-justification present in the work of Logan is starkly different to the Plutarchian idealist of Robertson: his is the Alexander forging an empire at any cost in the face of opposition, making the conqueror type of Seneca and Milton acceptable for the broader sake of the empire.

There was a striking turnaround evidenced in Robertson's *Disquisition.* The clear dichotomy between two broad types of empire, the one Britain should favour – given as commercial by Barbon, Paterson and Defoe - and those represented by Alexander - the archetypical land conqueror – had succumbed to significant slippage. The task of maintaining an ideology of commercialism alongside liberty became unsustainable by the late-eighteenth century. But Robertson resolved this by casting Alexander as a visionary. Briant mainly comments upon Robertson's argument for Indian governance. Alexander holding India - as the font of trade and development - was also a justification for having a land-empire at all. Robertson argued that Alexander's empire was about adding conquest of the sea to his conquest of the land: 'he seems, soon after his first successes in Asia, to have formed the idea of establishing a universal monarchy, and aspired to the dominion of the sea as well as of the land.'[600] This was an inversion of the process that Britain was engaged in: moving from the sea-based empire to one coming to terms with the results of its aggressive mercantilism. By offering global commercial utility as justification, Robertson provided a route to redemption of the whole. Having control of India, Robertson saw the 'prospect of obtaining the sovereignty of those regions which supplied the rest of mankind with so many precious commodities.'[601] Britain could have an empire that could exhibit the beneficial mercantilism of a polity such as Tyre. But rather than the proliferating agents of trade, it was the monolithic

[600] Robertson 1791: 10.
[601] Robertson 1791: 13.

ambition and grand purview of Alexander that caught Robertson's attention. His conquests could incorporate and therefore connect Indian wealth to the rest of the world:

> By opening the navigation in this manner, he proposed, that the valuable commodities of India should be conveyed from the Persian Gulf into the interior parts of his Asiaic dominions, while by the Arabian Gulf they should be carried to Alexandria, and distributed to the rest of the world.[602]

Robertson had little choice but to opt for the commercial utility of land-empire. Where Defoe saw a clear difference between the free traders of Britain and the impetuous will of Alexander, the late-eighteenth century controversy saw a latent sea-empire ideology clash with a despotic land-empire reality. This precluded any attempt to untie an empire of conquest and rule from one of commercial trade. Robertson could seek only to reconcile them. If Alexander's aims could be in keeping with the ideology of the "first" British Empire, Britain could perhaps remain commercial while promoting the needs of its subjects and mankind.

Finally, in surveying the place of heroes thoughout the eighteenth century, William Johnson has claimed that the 'superman' or self-fashioning, aristocratic warrior, spent the century 'waiting to be resurrected by the Satanists and Imperialists of the nineteenth century.'[603] Chapter 2 showed how this type had definitely been joined by many different heroic types. However, the desire for supermen never disappeared. Moral and civic backbone was demanded and received, but the heroes of empire had to embody martial vigour. The solipsistic aspect of heroism had definitely diminished: Britain's greatest warriors embodied the polis accoutred with liberty and commercial progress. The pomp of Beddoes' account in the latter part of the century evoked more than just a glance towards the superman by the end of the century. In the work of Robertson and Beddoes, Alexander's

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[602] Robertson 1791: 25.
[603] William Johnson 1982: 34.

individual *areté* is enmeshed with his commercial aims. Rather than passing the time in suspended animation waiting for revival, as Johnson implies, Alexander was an all-powerful hero holding a panoptical vision of empire. Alexander was the guiding hand, the conquering sword but also a mind that held commerce as his goal and improvement as his legacy. The following chapter will explore how Napoleon would exemplify the dangers and potential of such dynamic leadership.

4. THE FOOTSTEPS OF ALEXANDER: RESPONSES TO NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

The previous chapter demonstrated how, by the mid-eighteenth century, the heroes of Britain's incipient empire could be praised for their military victories because their glory was seen to protect and embody the values of the nation.[604] In the 1780s, the perceived gap between these heroes and the perceived notion of selfish, destructive, "ancient" conquest had collapsed. The trial of Hastings demonstrates how empire had brought the methods of antique heroes too close for comfort. The paean for Alexander by Thomas Beddoes further exposes just how far the dichotomy had been subverted: concern with how empire was managed pushed forward an antique soldier – under an veneer of commercial utility - as a preferable alternative to his British counterparts. By the 1790s, there were two broad types of allusion made to Alexander. He was either a commercial visionary or a ruthless conqueror associated with despotism. Britain and its heroes, furthermore, were positioned in relation to these models in ways complimentary *and* damaging to self-image. Into this already dynamic discourse on heroes, Alexander and Britain's empire, stepped a young French general with considerable martial potential and coruscating ambition. The task of this final case-study is to understand how Britain's complex relationship with conquerors was stirred when a dangerous enemy passed through the multifaceted conceptual lens provided by Alexander. Two mutually implicated processes will be explored. First, how an exceptional candidate for *comparatio* exposed the ambivalence of the British attitude towards conquerors and forced a reconsideration of the appellation of "Great Man". Second, how the coincidence of imperial place and purpose meant that the concept of Alexander as a visionary would inform an existential battle for imperial dominance.

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[604] They contributed to what Colley (2003: 178-88) calls an "ostentatious cult of heroism and state service." These heroes encouraged Britons to be seen as actors in an imperial epic, by the turn of the nineteenth, a sense that Britain had a canon of its own heroes in British military uniform not togas.

4.1. THE GENERAL IS A GREAT MAN

Napoleon's many early successes in Italy and against the major continental powers of Austria and Prussia led to writers on both sides of the channel to cite "greatness", as defined by some familiar conquerors, as a means of contextualising his achievements.[605] One commentator noted that Napoleon was: '"the greatest man that ever liv'd,"' another that '"he certainly surpassed ... Alexander and Caesar"'.[606] In a popular biography translated into English, Napoleon's education was scoured for the wellspring of his ambition to conquer.[607] It purported to be based in part on the account of a school acquaintance, who noted the extraordinary energy devoted by the young military cadet to the study of historical works (especially Plutarch), and the vigorous pursuit of games and battles to 'imitate the enthusiastic fury of those ancient writers'.[608] In the eyes of this friend, a comparison with Alexander was apt for understanding the impatience and *modus operandi* of the young officer: 'he is all activity; and everywhere the same; whether you behold him fighting, negotiating, punishing, it is always an affair of a moment, of a word, never any hesitation; he cuts the Gordian Knot which he cannot untie.'[609] These accounts revived the conception that heroes inspired contemporary great men to imitate classical figures:

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[605] The ancient world was certainly not the only or primary means of doing this: Charlemagne was popular and, during the various invasion scares, the obvious comparison as William of Normandy – Semmel (2004: 31).

[606] Quoted in Mitchell (2005: 88). The former was Lady Bessborough in an 1807 letter to Granville Leveson, the latter was to D. O'Bryan. All were prominent Whigs, a group that had a particular respect for Napoleon.

[607] There is no doubt the allusions were often encouraged, because, when it came to Napoleon's own publicity machine, to a large extent he cultivated his image by using classical characters. Hanley (2005: 45-7) notes that Napoleon was often compared to Caesar in terms of his achievements and his style of writing - the use of direct address and often hyperbolic prose. For a detailed study of this sophisticated and calculated apparatus of self-representation, which included army newspapers, medals, and Napoleon's own letters, reports and proclamations: 'Years later [after carrying classical works around Corsica]... Bonaparte welcomed and consciously fostered comparisons between himself and Alexander, Caesar, and Hannibal..., not only in the French press at large, but also in his own newspapers, in his patronage of the arts, and in his use of medals as propaganda devices. For comparisons of Napoleon and Caesar, see Wyke (2007: 56, 80, 157-8).

[608] Mr C.H. 1797: 23.

[609] Mr C.H. 1797: 23.

> Above all, the study of history occupied all his time. To those studies he gave himself up without relaxation: and I have no doubt but his enthusiasm originated in his favourite reading of the lines of great and illustrious men, when he had from the beginning, proposed to himself as proper models.[610]
>
> Eager to gain the approbation of his young rivals, it was in these juvenile plays that he first learned the way to conquer; from then sprung that warlike enthusiasm, which afforded the first display of his great genius kindled into admiration of the heroes of antiquity, their great actions and virtues become his models, and the glory of surpassing them the object of his life.[611]

Digging into the classical was a process also eagerly undertaken in flattery of the young general from the pens of French critics:

> Others search mythology and history to find a surname to give you. The pens of our writers are not rapid enough to keep up with your victories. Some proclaimed you a hero, a demigod, the marvel of our times and a subject for astonishment for our children...these are not bad accomplishments, especially for one so young, younger than Alexander.[612]

The simplest function of these comparisons was to provide a reason for Napoleon's outstanding achievements and striking methods. The praise of his martial greatness indicates that recourse to the model of ancient virtue was still valid, even after the major assaults by Fielding and others fifty years previously.[613] But the emphasis on the 'search' for the root of Napoleon's particular characteristics and ambitions indicates that Napoleon was a throwback. The admiring glances from the British side of the channel, furthermore, capture an ambivalent fascination that continued even when he became a dangerous enemy.

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[610] Mr C.H. 1797: 16.
[611] Mr C.H. 1797: 26.
[612] Marechal, S. *Correctif a la gloire de Bonaparte, ou letter a ca general Venice* (1797) quoted in Hanley (2005: 178).
[613] See chapter 2.3.

Early success engendered a fairly detached and genial appreciation of his success. Initial positive valence gave way to fear when he threatened to invade Britain in 1798, and again in 1803. These threats inspired a strident anti-Gallic response from British gazetteers. Popular treatises revelled in attacking Napoleon, fulfilling a need to make sense of the danger and inspire a patriotic response. The material encompasses fictitious tales of French atrocities, loyalist broadsides and handbills that ridicule Napoleon's ambition or predict rape and slavery if the British were to come under his heel.[614] C*omparatio* with Alexander alluded to the negative aspects of conquerors. The threat of the invasion of Britain in 1803 provoked the composition of a patriotic song - *The Devil and the Consul* (printed by arch-loyalist James Asperne) – which was set to a popular tune.[615] Capturing the lighter side of a vitriolic tranche of publications, it took the form of a record of conversation overheard during a chance meeting on a Parisian street:

> As the devil thro' Paris one day took a Walk,
> Buonaparte he met – and they both had some Talk;
> Great Hero, says Satan, pray how do you do?
> I am well, cried the Consul, my service to you.
> Derry down, down, down, derry down!

The devil spoke to the Consul about the consternation his conquests were causing:

> Alexander and Caesar fine Heroes in Story
> Are jealous I know of your deeds and your Glory:
> Tho' they push'd thro' the Globe all their Conquests
> pell mell,
> And rull'd Monarchs on Earth, now their Subjects in Hell.
> Derry down.

On being informed he is going to hell for his actions, Napoleon reacts with astonishment:

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[614] See Semmel (2004: chapt. 3) for an overview of the Broadsides.
[615] Asperne was a loyalist bookseller and proprietor of the *European Magazine.* He participated in a "coordinated" attack on Napoleon – Semmel (2004: 41).

Par blieu! cried the Consul, and dropp'd on his knee,
A much cooller Lodging would satisfy me!
Hold! Hold! Satan cries, such a mighty Commander-
Should roast by the Side with his Friend Alexander!
Derry down, down, down, derry down.[616]

The song places Napoleon as the Devil's right hand in waiting. He was to sit alongside Plutarch's most famous conquering heroes, whose 'deeds' and 'glory' resulted from the satanic pursuit of 'pell mell' or indiscriminate victories. This echoes attacks on the morality of conquest by Milton, Temple, Fielding and the Roman Stoics.[617] *The Devil and the Consul* fitted Napoleon into a strand of criticism which struck against anachronistic models of virtue, men whose self-aggrandising aggression was seen as immoral, since their achievements were destructive and criminal.[618]

The anti-conqueror argument had been at its most overtly negative in Fielding's work where it attacked Walpole for factional reasons. Here it was patriotic and uniting, a call to arms against a dangerous, immoral conqueror, to a society which could not necessarily be relied upon to oppose him.[619] Typical of the wider literature, the intended message of the piece is suitably tub-thumping; John Bull *will* put the Frenchman in his rightful place, as the Devil himself points out:

When the Time shall arrive that's determin'd by Fate-

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[616] *The Devil and the Consul. A new song* 1803.

[617] The equation of criminality and conquest had resurfaced elsewhere. *A Parallel between Alexander the Great and a Highwayman; showing That the great Victories of the one are no more to be justified than the Robberies of the other* (1800) was a pamphlet presumably based upon Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* and gave an account of common robbery and murder in Kentish town by a man called Bagshot. The pamphlet argued that Alexander was far worse than Bagshot, since he possessed all the things that Bagshot hoped to acquire, making his temptation for his crimes less than a common criminal. The result (1800: 6) was that Alexander threatened much 'more dreadful and extensive evil'. Alexander killed more men but, perversely, was treated in a starkly different way: 'But it is strange, that one man has been immortalized as a god, and another put to death as a felon, for actions which have the same motive and tendency.....[made more perverse by] that the action which exposes a man to infamy and death, wants only greater aggravation of guilt, and more extensive and pernicious effects, to render him the object of veneration and applause'.

[618] See chapter 2.3.

[619] For example those Whigs mentioned above (n. 606), but also other supporters of the Jacobin cause – Semmel (2004: 44).

That you quit for Invasion your Consular Seat;
Fear not- if bold Britons should prove your o'erthrow,
Your're sure of a seat in my Kingdom below![620]

Since opposing a satanic type of conqueror was closely associated with liberty and the good of mankind, this was an assertion of the martial and moral dominance of the British nation. Conversely, earlier *comparatio* between British and ancient great men inherently contained a measure of respect for Alexander; accusing Napoleon of being more successful than his great "friend" (the cause of the 'jealousy' of the ancient heroes), provided proof of his threat. The song illustrates the difficult task facing the author. Recourse to an ancient conqueror may have imbued the subject with enough moral approbation to rouse patriotic resistance, but it also raised Napoleon to the heights of martial prowess. As a threat to Britain he required a staunch rebuttal, but Napoleon's achievements were reflected in his placement in an exalted, if wicked, pantheon.

Over a decade later, Lord Clive damned Napoleon's invasion of Russia. In an attempt to censure Napoleon's conduct, he drew upon Alexander's meeting with the Scythians, comparing it with Napoleon's application of the appellation "barbarians" to the local population:

> But this was not the first time that a conqueror, when he found himself unable to combat the difficulties that opposed his progress, endeavoured to load with the same stigma the persons who had the boldness to resist him; in which a disgraceful attempt was sought to be covered under the offer of indignities to a gallant people. Alexander the Great, under much the same circumstances, chose to designate as robbers and barbarians, the ancestors of these very Russians who had the courage to oppose his encroachments. To such language they answered as they ought to have done, "that not to them who defended their country, but to him who came to despoil it, the appellation of robber was applicable;" and he would ask, might not the Russians now exclaim to Buonaparté, as their ancestors did to Alexander the

[620] *The Devil and the Consul. A new song* 1803.

> Great, "*At tu, qui te gloriaris ad latrones persequendos venire; omnium gentium quos adisti, latrones*." Might not Russia with great truth thus address Buonaparté, "By what right do you designate us as barbarians; why cast upon a nation whom you are wantonly attacking, the stigma of being robbers?"[621]

The title 'robber' pointedly ousts the term 'conqueror' earlier in the speech, in an attempt to reduce Napoleon's actions to a criminal enterprise.[622] The analogy with Alexander serves to point to the illegality of his conquests and illustrate his moral hypocrisy. As with the *Devil and the Consul*, the trouble with Napoleon was that the more explicit and fitting this comparison became, the more dangerous he appeared. This was not least because the audience knew full well that the outcome of the episode - whatever its morality - was still the conquest of an empire. Unlike the *Devil and the Consul,* Clive's assault did not mask its impotence with bluster about British force. There is no prediction of, or incitement to, British intervention; it was the retort of a mere bystander.

The texts considered so far in this chapter sit apart geo-politically from the main case study, but they offer an introduction to the themes explored through the connection to Alexander. First, that Napoleon's extraordinarily status had revived the discussion of great men, both in overtly positive and negative terms. Second, the connection made between Alexander and Napoleon in the final two texts drew heavily upon the same model used by Fielding and others, but there were clear complications. When Fielding used him as a blunt instrument to attack Walpole, Alexander was a generic, instantly recognisable stereotype, reworked to make a stark analogy for the

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[621] Clive 1812. The quote is taken from Curt. 7.8.19; see also Cic. *De. Rep.* 3.14 and Aug. *De. Civ. Dei* 4.4.25. Clive is speaking in response to the king's speech at the opening of parliament. His remarks begin with praise for Wellesley's virtues in context of his victories in the Peninsular War (the subject of the previous address).Wellesley is also compared to Alexander by Sir Frederick Flood (Flood 1814), indicating there is potentially scope for further research into the distinction between the French and British antagonists regarding virtue and great men.

[622] See 2.3. for Fielding, although Clive may have just gone directly to Curtius. Making the Russians descendants of the Scythians stretched an analogy and this illustrates the ubiquity of the "crimes" of Alexander.

dangers of a political culture. The implication was that outrage would be forthcoming if the reader recognised what Walpole really was. Fifty years later, although Alexander was still a generic comparison, Napoleon *was* actually a conqueror (and an active one). This relic of a previous era was little more than a channel-hop away in 1803, so any *comparatio* heightened his threat, even flattered him.

The basis of the celebration of Marlborough or Wolfe was that these British heroes had matched Alexander martially *and* surpassed him through their utility. There was a desire to outperform the ancient conqueror, while maintaining the moral high-ground and disassociating Britain from his modes of conquest (the Impeachment prosecutors had slandered Hastings by alluding to that same rapaciousness). In the case of Napoleon, the normal route taken by critics to dismiss "antique" conquerors was still useful, but only just. A similar manoeuvre was attempted in the *Devil and the Consul*: Napoleon's great threat could be mitigated by elevating the strength of John Bull and portraying Napoleon as morally bankrupt. What follows will demonstrate that this two-pronged approach - belittling and disassociating - was preferred by Napoleon's critics, but it was very difficult to sustain. Napoleon's willing and obvious *imitatio* of Alexander meant that writers were often forced to significantly distort the parallel for fear of granting Napoleon too great a compliment.

4.2. RE-FOUNDING ALEXANDRIA

A comparison with the conqueror of Asia was not a particularly close fit for a French general intent upon invading Russia or England.[623] The *comparatio* became geopolitically appropriate when Napoleon invaded Egypt, an event that provoked the deployment of comparisons with Alexander's visionary conquests by writers on both sides of the Channel. The works are split between the current chapter section and the one following. They show how the historiography was refracted in the letters and journals of Napoleon's

[623] William the Conqueror was a better analogy for the latter for obvious reasons.

comrades and how the invasion disturbed British observers. The rationale for the inclusion of the "French" material here is twofold. These works appeared in translation in England during or within a few years of the invasion. These works, which were therefore selected on the basis of their interest to the British public, give an indication of the way in which Napoleon and his invasion was being presented in British discourse. Second, and with reservations regarding their partiality, they act as evidence of the French conception of their conquests in Egypt.

While commanding an army earmarked for England in 1798, Napoleon wrote privately to the Executive Directory regarding the proposed invasion. After conducting extensive investigations of England's defences, he conceded that British naval power meant it would 'be many years before we achieve supremacy at sea'.[624] The proposed invasion was therefore deemed too dangerous, and instead a location for a strike against England was to be sought elsewhere. Using France's powerful army, Bonaparte thought a significant blow could be struck against England in the Levant. Napoleon intended to use Egypt as a means of disrupting Britain's commercial supremacy by controlling the overland routes from India.[625] The

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[624] Bonaparte 1954: n. 40, p. 72. This was not published at the time. He notes: 'We should therefore give up any real attempt to invade England, and content ourselves with the appearance of it, whilst devoting all our attention and resources to the Rhine....Or we might well make an expedition into the Levant, and threaten the commerce of India.' He noted in August that 'to destroy England, it will be necessary to seize Egypt' - see also Hoskins (1966: 55).

[625] This was not a new policy. After suffering the loss of significant territories after the Seven Years War, operations had been mooted in the Levant, and again most recently by Talleyrand in the early years of the republic. Although it may have been independently conceived by Napoleon, and even made reference to Alexander, to invade Egypt as the prelude for further campaigns in Asia, this was not the first instance of French strategy looking eastwards to threaten Britain's empire in India. Egypt had long been considered as a desirable target since the *ancien regimé* and by the Directorate from the early years of the republic, especially by Talleyrand. See Hoskins (1966: 55) who considers France's invasion of Egypt 'the logical outgrowth of a generation of French policy in the Levant translated into action by peculiarly favorable circumstances both in Europe and in the East,' rather than 'solely spring[ing] from the ambition and genius of the Corsican.' It was also claimed by some at the time that this was a prelude to launch an invasion of India (see below). It is not the task of this chapter to excavate the plans for the invasion, but future research might consider the depth of the relationship between Alexander historiography and French and British interest in the Levant as part of the strategy of empire.

proclamation to the army of Egypt, made on the 28th of June as the French prepared to disembark outside Alexandria, invoked Alexander as the natural inspiration for an invasion of Egypt beginning at the city he founded:

> SOLDIERS,- You are about to undertake a conquest the effects of which on civilisation and commerce are incalculable. The blow you are about to give to England will be the best aimed, and the most sensibly felt.... The first town we shall come to was built by Alexander. At every step we shall meet with grand recollections, worthy of exciting the emulation of Frenchmen.[626]

We cannot take such a flourish as evidence for motivation for the expedition, but this piece does serve as indication of its rhetoric. Three import facets of the conceptualisation of the invasion arise from this. First, that conquest in Egypt could have 'incalculable' world-changing repercussions; it was a dis-embarkation point literally and in terms of its historical consequences. Second, that any conquests undertaken from this city – Alexandria - had a fundamental connection with its founder. Finally, the repercussions held particular danger for England and her imperial interests.

Amidst the writings of the soldiers and savants that accompanied the expedition, the idea that they were following the Macedonian was taken seriously.[627] This is illustrated by accounts notable for their palpable

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[626] Recorded amongst other places in *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* (1798). See Herold 1963: 56 for the timing and a copy of the proclamation.

[627] There is less mention of Alexander than one may have come to expect from modern narratives of Napoleon's career. It is difficult and not within the scope of the current project to unwind where the personal aping of Alexander and Caesar ended and the propaganda began - see Herold (2005: 33). Scholars have been too eager to take these claims at face value. For instance, with no evidence Martin Bernal (1987:185) states 'he clearly imagined himself as Alexander – seen in a very Greek way – and he took Plutarch's *Lives* with him to provide Classical models. He also had a copy of the *Iliad*, whose hero Achilles had been an inspiration to Alexander.' The mention of the *Iliad* is without reference and I have not been able to verify it. Said (1995: 80) also claims 'the idea of reconquering Egypt as a new Alexander proposed itself to him.' See also Strathern (2007: passim) for an overdeveloped sense of what amounts to a relationship between Napoleon and Alexander. Herold (2005: 33) gives a later letter claiming to take inspiration from Alexander, as an example of the Bonaparte's early mentality in planning a conquest of Egypt that would be noted for its contribution to learning as much as its predicted military successes. Therefore his claim for Napoleon's *imitatio* on the basis that 'had not Alexander the Great taken philosophers and savants with him when he went to conquer Egypt, Persia, and India?' is rather thin. However, it is clear that the ancient world was significant in Napoleon's education and

disappointment that the city they expected to find was missing. In the excitement of arrival, rather than attending to the practical minutiae of their stay, the architect Charles Norry and his compatriots were already imbued with its textual history and therefore overwhelmed on location: 'our minds were occupied by matters very different [from setting up camp]. We immediately hastened to satisfy that eager curiosity excited in every foreigner on his first arrival in a country so celebrated in history.'[628] No sooner had they confronted the actuality of this historical city, than their hopes were dashed by the realities of its sadly reduced state:

> We looked for the Alexandria of Alexander, built by the architect Dinocrates;[629] we looked for that City in which were born, or educated, so many great men... we looked for that commercial city, and its active and industrious inhabitants; but we found in every quarter only ruin, barbarism, debasement, and poverty.[630]

The division between the expectation of the bustling, commercial Greek city, and its situation under the Porte was crushing.[631] In addition to the edition of Norry, a collection of letters captured and published by the British in late 1798 echo this disappointment.[632] One particularly sarcastic comment laid

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Alexander *was* of considerable use during his invasion of Egypt. The subject is ripe for both an in depth reevaluation and study of the historiographical hall of mirrors that has resulted.

[628] Norry 1800: 25. Notes on where they garnered that history are distributed below.

[629] See Val. Max., 1.4 ext. 1., for Dinocrates. See Pliny *HN*. 5.10. 11 (62) for Dinochares as architect.

[630] Norry 1800: 26.

[631] An example of a binary cultural distinction that would be most explicit in the nineteenth century, but exceeds the scope of the current work – see Hagerman (2009).

[632] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798. The provenance of the collection of letters does not preclude some tampering by a British hand and at least indicates a specific British interest in antiradical propaganda. The collection was made by a loyalist publisher, ostensibly to show the gap between the stated grand ambitions of the invasion - indicated in the proclamation above which was also given in the work - and what the editor feels was the true aim: to rid the directorate of a potentially troublesome army. Hence the episodes and facts are selected to show the ill-prepared nature of the army. Since the claims in the quotes given here run counter to editor's claim (and interpreted somewhat weakly as evidence of the success of the subterfuge), the material is taken as a decent representation of the letters. If, upon further research it can be determined that they are indeed misrepresented, then these letters become useful for showing that the British responses to the same event were closely aligned with Denon below and Norry above and the responses indicated in section 4.3.

emphasis upon hopes that they might confront a city worthy of commercial prospects:

> This country, so much celebrated, is by no means worthy of the character it has obtained; the most savage and uncultivated spot in France is a thousand times more beautiful. Nothing on earth can be so gloomy, so wretched, and so unhealthy as Alexandria, the most commercial spot in Egypt![633]

The city could not live up to the reputation engendered by its historical legacy. A common soldier noted:

> Let us return to Alexandria, - This city has nothing of its antiquity but the name – if there be any other Relicks*[634] of it, they remain utterly unregarded and unknown, among a people, who appear to be scarce conscious of their own existence. Add, that around this mass of misery and honour, lie the ruins of the most precious monuments of the arts.[635]

The artistic, moral and commercial bankruptcy of Alexandria was a forlorn inversion of the expectations expressed in the invasion proclamation. What was physically tangible was constantly filtered through the imaginative recognition of the past.[636] The sentiment of decline was brought into relief by a grasp of the city's early commercial history. The visitors seem to have had a genuine expectation, born of their textual memory, that they would find the commercially vibrant, Ptolemaic city. The resulting gap between perception and reality elicited obvious disappointment.

But the place was not without hope. The predicted 'grand recollections' of the proclamation were interpreted as the ideals of the *incipit*, ideals that still invigorated the onlooker. Vivant Denon, a prominent savant and close friend

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[633] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798: 108. The author might have even been mockingly echoing the wording of the proclamation.
[634] Here the editor guesses at a missing word.
[635] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798: 157. The letter is marked "Grand Cario", dated July 28th and entitled *My Dear Parents*. The editor is at pains to show how this letter shows how Napoleon has duped his soldiers with his rhetoric.
[636] Norry (1800: 28-9) focused on notable "artefacts" such as 'Pompey's pillar' and 'Cleopatra's bath' - i.e. the remnants of the classical world.

of Napoleon, published his account of the campaign five years later. Denon saw the ruins, but the physical quickly gave way to the imaginary:

> I saw ferocious ignorance of the arts labouring to destroy them, and unable, notwithstanding, even yet to have disfigured these beautiful fragments which display the noble principles of first design.[637]

Denon could see the beauty of the designer by connecting the ruin to his imaginary city. Despite the efforts of the later inhabitants, he was able to see past the ruins and recover the grand ideals of the original. When he surveyed Alexandria he distinguished between two parts, one that was visible in the streets, the other interpolated by the mind:

> The lofty walls...a few gardens... the Turkish castle, the mosques, the minarets; the celebrated pillar of Pompey, and my imagination went back to the past, I saw art triumph over nature, the genius of Alexandria employ the active hands of commerce, to lay, on a barren coast, the foundations of a magnificent city, and select that city as the depository of the trophies of the conquest of the world.[638]

The viewer's imagination finds ample succour in a history that speaks of triumphant economic vibrancy.[639] The material ruins may not initially offer the Alexandria that was expected, but it is still recoverable thanks to Denon's appreciation of the city's history.

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[637] Denon 1803: 15. See especially Norry (1800: 48-53) for an appendix on the column including a drawing. The juxtaposition of ruins with remnants of its glory is also prominent in the landscape: 'It is a mere heap of ruins, where you see a paltry hovel of mud and straw stuck against the magnificent fragments of a granite column! The desolation is rendered the more striking by being within view of two objects [Pompey's column; Cleopatra's needle], which have passed uninjured through the lapse of ages that has devoured every thing around them.' His narrative of his journey with Napoleon was later to make Denon famous. He was given the directorship of the Central Museum by Napoleon in 1802. See Wilson-Smith (1996: 249-74) for an overview of his life.

[638] Denon 1803: 15.

[639] Denon 1803: 15. The next stage of his reverie returns to the corruption of the Alexandrian ideal: 'I saw the Ptolemies invite the arts and sciences, it was there said I, thinking of Cleopatra, of Caesar, and of Anthony that the empire of glory was sacrificed to the empire of voluptuousness!'

Armed with a sense of the past, the French hoped to restore the commercial dynamism of the Ptolemaic era. This is demonstrated by a selection of letters which re-emphasize a belief in the rhetoric of the proclamation. They each recognise the sorry present state of the city, but this recognition does not overturn their optimism:

> Such is the coast of this country, so fertile in the interior! And which, under an enlightened government, might see once more revived the Age of Alexander and the Ptolemies.[640]

> Such is Egypt, so celebrated by travellers and historians! In despite, however, of all these horrors, of the hardships we endure, and of the miseries the army is condemned to suffer, I am still inclined to think that it is a country calculated above all others to give us a colony which may be productive of the highest advantage.[641]

> The port of Alexandria is absolutely destitute of means, either for victualing or refitting a ship. But conquest will soon enable us to draw immense advantages from it. Alexander did everything in a year![642]

The French hope to revive Alexander's city by following Alexander's industrious example. It is to be rebuilt to the standard of the historic city that they expected to find.

A series of conceptual moves lie behind this expectation. The French accounts elide Alexander's foundation - his 'noble principles of first design,' as Denon calls them - with the later success of the Ptolemaic city. The Ptolemies do not merely continue to occupy the same space. Commercial success was in the genes, an unbroken ideal running from Alexander's foundation to the later city. Norry's 'Alexandria of Alexander', for example,

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[640] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798: 21. The author is given as the Commissary to the Fleet, Jaubert.
[641] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798: 160. The Editor comments: that despite the evidence of his own eyes 'he drops the assurance of fact, and in the fallacious expectations of future advantages, consoles himself for present disappointments.'
[642] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798: 33. Again, the author is given as the Commissary to the Fleet, Jaubert.

is one and the same as his notion of the 'commercial city' of Ptolemy and it is the 'Age of Alexander *and* the Ptolemies'.[643] A review of the accounts of Alexandria's foundation demonstrates that this relied upon a strung-together reading of the source material.[644] Alexander is only seen to choose the site of the city. The sources focus mainly upon an omen of birds eating the barley-meal that Alexander used to lay out the boundaries of the planned city. This is interpreted as a sign that it would provide food for many countries.[645] Plutarch's *Lives* similarly talks of the 'abundant and helpful resources' that will stem from Alexandria.[646] Arrian is more forthcoming on the vision of the founder: 'it struck him that the position was admirable for founding a city there and that it would prosper' and that the 'city would be prosperous in general, but particularly in the fruits of the earth'.[647] This is the only source that explicitly cites Alexander's decision as being farsighted. Finally, the size and splendour of the Hellenistic city is emphasised by Diodorus: as the 'first city of the civilised world it is certainly far ahead of the rest in elegance and extent and riches and luxury'.[648] Taken together these accounts portray a well-chosen place for a commercial city that then became the foremost city in the world.

But to claim commercial renaissance required a conception of the city that concomitantly undermined its present state. The contemporary city – variously 'barren' or 'destitute' – precluded a desire to *continue* the Ptolemaic city; the physical city alone could not provide the evidence of the commercialism that it was famous for. The implication is that this is a comparable state to how the site would have been before Alexander arrived

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[643] My emphasis.
[644] For an account of the founding of the city see Fraser (1972: 1-7).
[645] Curt. 4.8.1-6; Val. Max. 1.4 ext; Just., *Epit.* 11.11.13 simply notes that it would be capital of Egypt.
[646] Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 26. Plut. *De. Alex. Fort.* 5, argues for Alexander's cities as a civilising force, but with no particular emphasis on Alexandria in Egypt. Curtius commends Alexander's practical judgment on choosing the advantageous site, as does Strabo (17.1.6-10) implicitly when he comments on the design and position of the harbour.
[647] Arr. *Anab.* 3.1.5, 2.1. For Alexander's purpose in founding cities more generally, see 4.1.3, 24.7 and 6.22.3.
[648] Diod. Sic. 17.52.

to realise its potential. A *re-foundation* was necessary and this took vision akin to that which the French perceived in Alexander when he laid out its original precincts. By dint of Denon and others' historical "enlightenment", the French claimed a foresightedness of commercial principle and future beyond what was physically tangible. Armed with their knowledge of the past, and as they perceived similar foresight in Alexander, the French claimed to recognise the future of the great trade port.

Yet, after confronting the physical and having to summon up the imaginary to compensate, the French were well aware that they were not facing the same *tabula rasa* that once confronted Alexander. The treatment of the contemporary occupants was crucial in complementing the view of the state of the city. The accounts also emphasize the ignorance of the natives regarding the history of the place in stark comparison to the historical reverie of the French onlookers. This is typified by Denon's view that the material landscape with all its tumbled down relics of the past is 'utterly unregarded' by the locals, who have failed to sustain or even notice the principles of the founder. An anonymous soldier similarly noted the debasement of the city from its great heights:

> This city, which is still said to contain 10,000 inhabitants, has nothing of the ancient Alexandria but the name - the Arabs, indeed, call it *Scanderia*. The ruins of its former circuit announce that it was once a most extensive place, and might well contain the 300,000 people which historians have given it.[649] But the despotism and stupor which followed that period, and the discovery of the route to India by the Cape of Good Hope, have successfully reduced it to the miserable state in which it now lies.[650]

The defrauding of the Ptolemaic commercial powerhouse was all too evident in the battered remnants of the cityscape; alongside the French appreciation of Alexandria's history, these arguments mutually justified the act of re-

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[649] Diod. Sic. 27.52 for the population figure.
[650] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798: 21-2.

foundation. It was implied that the intrinsic possibilities of the city could not be realised under contemporary governance, but that the French were worthy of the task. As one of the French soldiers noted, 'conquest will soon enable us to draw immense advantages from it'.[651] Conquest was to be considered an act of utility, with the conquerors adding value to the city, as if it was a barren landscape. It was within the grasp of the French to succeed where the contemporary city had failed. Alexander provided the French with mutually conducive views of past, present and future. The French accounts argued that they were going to make the founding of Alexandria an act of "constructive" conquest once more.

The invasion was perceived as a constructive opportunity for France in the context of empire. The sources used so far in this section have not addressed the specific details of Napoleon's claim that 'the blow you are about to give to England will be the best aimed, and the most sensibly felt'.[652] The suggestion in the preceding source that the obliteration of Alexandrian trade was due to the discovery of the sea-route to India offers a hint at what was being attempted. A young French soldier's letter, furthermore, is indicative of how the French designs for Alexandria threatened England. When he explains the reasons for the expedition, his emphasis is on the trading gains that could be garnered from the French having control of Egypt:

> France, by the different events of the war and the Revolution, having lost her colonies and her factories, must inevitably see her commerce decline, and her industrious inhabitants compelled to procure at second hand the most essential articles of their trade.....To indemnify itself, therefore, for this loss, which may be considered as realized, the government turned its views to Egypt and Syria; countries which, by their climate and their fertility, are capable of being made the storehouse of France, and, in process of time, the *mart of her commerce with India. It is certain, that by seizing and organising these countries, we shall be enabled to extend our views still further; to annihilate by degrees, the English East India trade, enter*

[651] See n. 642.
[652] See n. 626.

> *into it with advantage ourselves; and, finally, get into our hands the whole commerce of Africa and of Asia.*[653]

After the invasion, Alexandria would be rehabilitated to form the centrepiece of an imperial power play: Asian trade would be co-opted by exercising leverage from Egypt, reversing the historical process that had reduced it to its present state. That the invasion could be claimed as a powerful attack on Britain's empire was not derived from a reading of the ancient sources alone. The citation of Alexandria as lynchpin in a trading empire which could control India and change the direction of world trade was predicated upon the conception of Alexander's campaigns as argued in the various histories in the late-eighteenth century. Alexandria had a strategic relevance for contemporary empire that was indebted to Robertson and his predecessors.[654]

When discussing the reasons for the choice of destination for the invasion, Edward Said has argued that Napoleon

> considered Egypt a likely project precisely because he knew it tactically, strategically, historically, and – not to be underestimated - textually, that is, as something one read about and knew through the writings of recent as well as classical European authorities.[655]

It is not the purpose of this section to comment on whether Alexander informed the direction of Napoleon's imperial strategy. His men, however, approached the city with a sense of the past garnered from ancient texts, presumably refracted through the work of recent writers and the rhetoric of the invasion. These texts demonstrate that the purpose and rhetorical justification of conquest were retained after, even strengthened by, the confrontation with the "real" Alexandria. The conceptual gymnastics undertaken in negotiating the dissonance between "reality" and "textual

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[653] *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt* 1798: 151. My emphasis.
[654] See chapter 3.2.
[655] Said 1995: 80.

reality", demonstrate the complexity of this process. At first, the preconception of the city was the catalyst for an unnerving encounter with Alexandria. But the contemporary city was easily accommodated within a self-serving narrative of Alexandria that joined the ideals of Alexander and Ptolemy to the plans of the French. It is not the aim of the current work to asses this episode against a broader thesis of the place of history in the process of imperialism. However, this case study demonstrates the crucial, if temporarily unsettling, deployment of Alexander when an invading force strategized and justified imperialism.

4.3. THE BRITISH FEAR

Writers on the other side of the channel were also concerned about the French plans for Alexandria. Before the French works considered in the previous section made it into the public domain in Britain, the response to the mere threat of an invasion concurred with the French estimation of the consequences of their acquisition of Egypt. Egypt had previously been considered as a hub of an overland route to India (most trade went round the Horn). This tactic had been pursued by Dundas in the 1780s, but abandoned amidst the disorder of the country in 1790.[656] By the end of the decade the possibility of establishing trade with India had petered out. Few ships to or from India now attempted to dock at Suez, since the Company did not wish to send goods through the region or risk undermining their monopoly.[657] The remnant policy towards Egypt by the time of Napoleon was to prevent a French invasion in order to stop any direct threat to British interests in

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[656] See Ingram 1984: 9-12. George Baldwin, the foremost agitator for this policy was eventually recalled as consul-general by Lord Grenville in 1791 as a result of wanting to prevent Britain's position in the colonies from compromising policy in Europe. This was not inherently a problem limited to Egypt and relationship with the Qajars is a topic outside the scope of the current work.

[657] For a detailed narrative of British attitudes to this area see Ingram (1978:6) who notes that the policy towards Egypt in this period was to keep other European counties out – or more generally Ingram (1984) and Hoskins (1966: chapt. 1 and 2). Pitt had investigated the possibilities for overland trade. For the previous unheeded warnings of dangers of European interventions in Egypt and the Levant, see Hoskins (1966: 56). This did not stop Hastings proposing trade to increase the capital flow into India - Ingram (1978: 8).

India.[658] Henry Dundas was now secretary to the war office, chair of the board of the East India Company and one of a triumvirate of ruling ministers (with William Pitt, the prime minister, and the Earl of Granville as foreign secretary). In Whitehall's approximation, the region of the Levant and Egypt was a vulnerable place to attack British trade dominance. Dundas was acutely aware of an uncomfortable possibility that France could secure Egypt as a means of gaining access to Asian trade, circumventing the southern route.[659] As Ingram evinces, the possibility of the French in possession of Egypt was shocking.[660] Dundas opined privately 'if any great European power shall ever get possession of Egypt, [it will] be possessed of the master key to all the commerce of the world', and, shortly afterwards, a fleet under Nelson was dispatched to impede the expedition.[661]

There is no direct proof that Dundas was thinking through a conception of Alexander, even though he had previous form.[662] The citation of the specific commercial utility of Egypt as the focal point for intercontinental trade, spanning the Levant to India, was identical to that made in the historiography on Alexander in the previous decades. Dundas and his family

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[658] Initially, there was little notion that the fleet assembled at Toulon would threaten Britain's eastern possessions. Ireland or perhaps Portugal were thought to be more likely targets. See Ingram (1981: 37) or Ingram (1970: 566). Granville was neither expecting nor concerned with the prospect – Ingram (1978: 13). It was only when intelligence of possible arrangements between Tipoo Sultan in Mysore and the French became apparent, that the possibility that the Levant or Egypt and then subsequently India could be the target. The development of this awareness and the reaction to it is outlined in detail in Ingram (1981).

[659] A second was that by direct naval and/or land invasion in concert with local opponents of the British, India could be reached. The steps against which will be considered below.

[660] Ingram 1984:8.

[661] Spencer (1913-24: vol.2. 317). Discussed in Ingram (1981: 39-40) but without much explication of the root of such concerns. See also *Dundas to Spencer* 27th August 1798 (1913-24: vol.2 455) when the secretary asks the Sea Lord to prevent Napoleon's reinforcement since 'Every thousand men added to that army I consider as a deep wound to India, and too many of them would prove mortal.' He also worries that Nelson will be able to doing nothing without land forces. 'It is a great consolation to me to see that Nelson proposed return immediately from Sicily to the Levant, for although it may be very doubtful whether he can do anything at Alexandria without land forces, yet his presence in those seas is absolutely necessary to give encouragement to the Porte, and indeed to Russia herself,' - *Lord Grenville to Spencer* 9th September 1798 in Spencer (1913-14: vol. 2 458-9). Baldwin was a close associate of Dundas and they had had correspondence over the matter of the overland route in the early eighties.

[662] See chapter 3.3.

had close connections with William Robertson.[663] It is highly unlikely, as chair of the board of control that he would not have read Robertson's *Disquisition.* But his understanding of the strategic situation was most likely to have been derived from much earlier works.[664] From Defoe onwards all of the English texts that avow Alexander as a visionary pinpoint Egypt's specific function as the hub of trade.[665] A few brief selections here reiterate how this was established as an inter-continental role. When George Lyttelton praised Alexander in his imagined post-mortem *Dialogue* with Charles XII, it was Alexandria that was centrepiece in this trade foundation:

> It was the son of Philip who planted Greek colonies as far as the Indies; who formed the projects of trade more extensive than his empire itself; who laid the foundations of them in the midst of his wars; *who built Alexandria*, to be the centre and staple of commerce between Europe, Asia, and Africa...[666]

His trading empire revolved around Alexandria as the lynchpin of three continents, a concept not lost in the French discussion outlined above, or in the comments of Dundas. The same connection was also present in the anonymous 'Sketch of Commerce' from *Town and Country Magazine*:

> Alexander, Philip's immediate successor, surnamed the Great, on account of his military exploits, but much more deserving of that epithet for his just ideas of the importance of trade, and his judicious schemes to promote it, after his conquest of Persia

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[663] Smitten 2004. Robertson owed his first clerical position to Dundas' father Robert, Lord Arnison. Although the pair clashed in the 1780s over church reform, they worked together on matters regarding the University of Edinburgh where Robertson was Principal from 1762 (Dundas would have been a student there shortly before). Dundas also supported Robertson's son, William, for the position of procurator of Kirk in 1778.

[664] His comments were almost identical to those written in *Speculation on the situation and reserves of Egypt* (1785) by George Baldwin, the foremost agitator for overland trade: 'France, in possession of Egypt would possess the master–key to all the trading nations of the earth... emporium of the world...by the facility she would command of transacting her forces thither, by surprise, in any number, and at any time; and England would hold her possessions in India, at the mercy of France'. Unfortunately, I have yet been unable to establish Baldwin's influences.

[665] Defoe has them limited to 'between *Egypt* and *Greece* and between *Egypt* and *Italy*' – see p. 141, n. 473.

[666] See p.146, n. 491.

> Phoenicia and Egypt, built the famous city of Alexandria...and opened the trade between the Indian, and Mediterranean seas.[667]

Connecting both seas, this crucially placed city would control two crucial trading networks. For William Robertson, after settling on a purpose to establish an empire of commerce,

> he founded a great city, which he honoured with his own name...that...it might command the trade both of the East and West. This situation was chosen with such discernment, that Alexandria soon became the chief commercial city in the world ... to the discovery of the navigation of the Cape of Good Hope, commerce, particularly that of the East Indies, continued to flow in the channel which the sagacity and foresight of Alexander had marked out for it.[668]

The combination of the location and a general with the effrontery to aspire to Alexander's legacy was potent and frightening. The invasion promised an inversion of the process that had taken the trade away from Alexandria to the sea-routes, and a process that currently meant that British sea-power secured a dominant position in India. The French threatened to return the city to its commanding role as the lynchpin in a new Alexandrian empire. The importance of Alexandria and Egypt was a claim closely associated with Montesquieu and echoed in the historiography from the 1770s onwards.

Even after the invasion ended in failure, concern at the opportunity (or danger) afforded by Egypt remained.[669] A work by Eyles Irwin - *The failure of the French Crusade* (1799) - sought to reiterate the danger by embellishing the idea of Egypt as a commercial lynchpin.[670] Irwin knew the possibilities of the region particularly well, as he had formerly served as an officer in the East

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[667] *Sketches of the History of Commerce, Section VI.* 1787: 305.
[668] Robertson 1780: 15-16. This section is also quoted in the *Sketches of the History of Commerce*.
[669] A phenomenon potentially, in part, due to the publishing of the captured letters discussed in section 4.2. These were published in 1798 and it would be intriguing to know whether Irwin had read them and changed his mind on the ambitions of the French.
[670] Irwin 1799: v. He notes, 'conjecture has been exhausted in forming ideas upon the real intent of a numerous force...dispatched for the fulfilment of a design, at once extensions, grand in its object, but pregnant with temerity, and big with danger.' Such reports suspected that Napoleon had designs to invade India (see section 4.4. below).

India Company, and had travelled overland to England from India in 1777.[671] The account is a guide to Egypt in its historical context, focussing on its commercial potential in order to educate the growing public interest in the topic.[672] It includes a map of possible routes to India and a guide to construction of canals and navigation and considered the practical role Egypt could have as the base for a French trading empire. Irwin was concerned that Egypt under the French will 'become the entrepôt of Indian trade' and, in a phrase close to the words of Robertson, 'unite the commerce of the East with that of the West'. This knowledge is based upon its obvious position linking the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean and natural advantages:

> Certain it is, that the situation of Alexandria is such that provided the commerce of the East could be turned towards Egypt and that city be made the port for all commodities, great advantages indeed may accrue to the nation to which it may belong.[673]

The idea of re-founding of a favourable site was even more specific than the French reports and required the same connection between Alexandria's foundational ideals and the later city:

> Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, the first king of Egypt, raised the power and splendour of Alexandria, which he knew had been built by Alexander, with a view to carry on a trade to India.[674]

Irwin reflected the similar argument for Alexandria's possibilities given in the French accounts: Alexander had ambitions that went beyond those of the ordinary conqueror. The implication had been grasped by commentators on both sides that the French could return Alexandria to its supposedly *original* purpose.

The assessment of the importance of Egypt as a means of destroying British commercial dominance of India was rooted within the historiography

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[671] Prior 2004.
[672] Presumably due to the appearance of the French items considered above.
[673] Irwin 1799: 44.
[674] Irwin 1799: 38. See also Blankett 1799 on the long term prospects for the French position in Egypt.

on Alexander of the previous fifty years. To be armed with an appreciation of Alexander's vision meant that one could make the conceptual leap between his city, control of commerce and danger to an empire in India. As Briant has argued, Robertson cited Alexander's role in opening up India as a means of arguing that his achievements were not just about conquest, but 'commercial' schemes based upon Alexandria.[675] Applied to the strategy of empire, the notion of what Napoleon could do with control of Egypt was formed thanks to a notion of Alexander's commercialism, and it was respectively a terrifying or inspiring thought. Not just a fantasy of propaganda or private cogitation, he demonstrated that what the French were ostensibly planning to do was possible and strategically sound.[676]

4.4. THE INVASION OF INDIA AND THE RETURN OF ALEXANDER

There was an alternative interpretation of the aims of the 1798 invasion. When news emerged that France was contemplating a landing somewhere in the Levant, the possibility was mooted that this was the beginning of an expedition to India. Indeed, this was the possibility that Dundas feared the most. In June, he even speculated privately that if Bonaparte should try to march from Alexandretta across Persia he did 'not see any reason to suppose that the object of reaching India may not be accomplished'.[677] Over the previous fifty years the large investment of British capital had meant that any foreign invasion was an existential threat; it could cripple the economy even if the attempt was unsuccessful in ousting the British.[678] Patrolling the intervening sea-routes and blocking any potential land operations was an acute strategic concern for Whitehall. Dundas sent 5,000 European troops to reinforce India in addition to securing the possible sea-routes (via Suez and

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[675] Briant 2005.
[676] Whether it is possible to argue for the conception of Alexander's vision instigating the turn of these powers to Egypt is a moot point worthy of further research.
[677] Dundas to Grenville, 13 June 1798 in Martin (1836-7: 678).
[678] As Ingram (1978: 17) points out the French did not need to be successful to ruin British India, just provoke a rebellion. See Marshall (2005) for background to the economic importance of India and the consequences of losing it and also Marshall (1998b: 11-2).

the Red Sea or via the Gulf of Persia). He also dispatched a fleet under Nelson to the Mediterranean.[679] The possibility that Dundas was using Alexander to inform his judgement is tantalising, but un-provable.[680] An earlier work of Eyles Irwin, however, explicitly used the comparison with Alexander to assess the credentials of the French operation. Hoping to ease a growing public fear, *An Enquiry into the Feasibility of the supposed expedition of Buoneparte to the east* (1798) consisted of a detailed rebuttal of Napoleon's 'boasted invasion of India'.[681] The basis of such claims, he expressed, were made upon 'the experience of former or the conviction of latter ages' or historical evidence in addition to contemporary hysteria.[682] Irwin felt an occupation of some Greek islands or Malta was a more likely target, but in either case he expected the fleet to be destroyed by Nelson's naval squadron based in the Mediterranean.[683] Nevertheless, he set out to dispel the fears of some and cure the credulity of others by showing the impossibility of the 'chimerical' task that faced the French.

The treatise was split into three parts, each detailing a proposed route for an invasion starting in Egypt. First, a short march to the Red Sea followed by a hop across to India is ruled out by the lack of transports and the "certainty" of interdiction by the British Navy. The slightly longer route to the Persian Gulf via Scanderoon and then Aleppo is perceived to be as doomed as the failures of Crassus and Julian, in view of local tribes and the inevitable shortages of water.[684] In Irwin's pointed opinion, 'if his genius be such as the world conceives, the very road which would be preferred by Buonaparté'

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[679] Ingram 1981: 37-8. Sen (1971: 555-9) notes that Napoleon actually had no plans further than Levant. See Bowen (1998: 541-6) for Dundas and India and Marshall (1998: 581-583) for the economic, or at least perceived economic, importance of India after 1760.
[680] Especially given his previous citations of Alexander in connection with Egypt and India and his apparent knowledge of the historiography.
[681] Irwin 1798a.
[682] Irwin 1798a: 5.
[683] Irwin 1798a: 5-8. The elevated position of Buonaparté in the British imagination is indicated here by the claim that 'The name of Buonaparté has given a credit and celebrity to this expedition which it did not deserve.'
[684] Irwin 1798a: 10-5.

would be 'Alexander's route from Phoenicia to the Indus'.[685] The timing of the piece precludes the Proclamation being his immediate provocation, so Irwin's snide comparison is presumably his contempt for the many allusions to Alexander being spouted at the time.[686] In comparison to the parallels discussed at the beginning of this chapter which accept the *comparatio* with Alexander, Bonaparte is ridiculed for self-sophistry. His is to be considered an inadequate act of *imitatio*. Irwin notes that

> the laurel of Ammon in his own conceit, would be admirably suited to the Corsican's brow and, however his ambition might be wounded by the event, there is no common distinction in the emulation, that impels to great action, and grasps immortal fame.[687]

Undertaking the same project is not enough to qualify one for the immortality accorded by fame to Alexander. In a move contrary to the critique of the emptiness of his virtue earlier in the century, Alexander's fame is accepted as a mark of his achievement, the result of a wish to belittle Napoleon's actions.[688]

Despite the difficulties Napoleon would face when crossing contemporary Asia, Irwin is prepared to suspend his disbelief. He felt he has 'granted so much to the advocates of this expedition' in publishing the work, that it is not his place 'to dispute the good fortune' of Alexander's successor. He even went as far as to admit that with 'equal success he may plant his standard on the banks of the Indus'. To allow himself scope for further mockery, Irwin adopts the conceit that Napoleon is every much as fortunate as Alexander, and that he will sweep across Asia: 'the Euphrates and the Tygris shall be

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[685] Irwin 1798a:16.
[686] He clearly did not know the destination even if the information could have made it back in a few days. The nature of Irwin's comments which are imply popular hysteria and the popularity of the trope (see section 4.1), indicate more citations of Alexander's invasion will emerge given further research.
[687] Irwin 1798a: 16. Ammon being the Egyptian god that Alexander travelled to Susa to visit - for example, Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 27.5-9.
[688] See chapter 2.3. Such revision is merely presented here to demonstrate the contrasting position *not* to indicate this was evidence of a broader change in attitude towards fame and virtue.

passed, Persian territories over-run, and another Darius submit to the influence of the tri-coloured flag!'[689] In order to emphasise the size of Napoleon's task, Irwin continues what is meant to be a ridiculous comparison by adding to the list of obstacles in his path. The French will not only have to reach the Indus (the limit of Alexander's incursion), but the Ganges to reach the British, and even this will not be the end of Napoleon's task. Irwin then argues that any proposed invasion of India would require local support; for the French to link up with their ally Tipu Sultan in Mysore would require Napoleon to march a further one thousand miles.[690] He cannot contain his ire at this 'Lucky delushion! That would divert the efforts of the implacable foe of Great Britain to his own destruction,' and wishes him 'Happy Ambition!'[691] But Irwin's trump card is not the difficulties of the landscape or the logistics. It is the one foe that Alexander did not have waiting for him on the banks of the Ganges. Irwin notes that he has 'purposely overlooked the impregnable forts...formidable armies of the East India Company'. He ridicules Napoleon's capacity to get as far as India, but proceeds with the exercise in order to further expose the misguided allusion to Alexander. By matching him against a force that Alexander never had to face, Irwin elevates the British above both.

Written on the 15th of July, the account was ignorant of the fact that Napoleon's attempted invasion of Egypt had already begun.[692] In response to the confirmation that Egypt was the destination on the 18th of July a further work - *Buonaparte in Egypt; or, An Appendix to the Enquiry* - asked,

> Is Egypt to be the prison or the grave of Buonaparté and his army? With a smaller force Alexander set out on his conquest of the world! And who can dive into the unfathomable views of this warrior and politician?[693]

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[689] Irwin 1798a: 17-8.
[690] Irwin 1798a: 19.
[691] Irwin 1798a: 19.
[692] Irwin 1798b.
[693] Irwin 1798b: 17.

Recent news had evidently elicited a surprised re-assessment. This time Irwin was forced into accepting ambition as a genuine basis for the parallel: 'Egypt might have been that first theatre, on which he wished, not only to exhibit his valour and talents to the Eastern hemisphere but, like the Macedonian hero to claim alliance with the gods.'[694] Like Alexander's visit to the oracle of Ammon, Napoleon's invasion 'would not surely be less in character with the ambition and morality of the Paganism, which regenerated France!' By using Alexander's claim to divinity as a loose analogy with the blasphemies of the republic, like Clive commenting on the invasion of Russia, Irwin reverted to placing both men as similarly hubristic conquerors. Despite his previous satire, Irwin admits Napoleon is at least serious about embarking upon such a madcap scheme and again entertains the possibility that he might reach India. Irwin still holds belief in the security of the country, but there is no lengthy conceit this time, merely a reiteration of his faith in the British army.[695] Napoleon *is* as crazy as Alexander and possibly as lucky. Fortunately for Irwin he is to be considered no greater than the British armed forces. Irwin has confidence in British force of arms, but Napoleon had a British critic considering the strategic effects of Alexander *imitatio*.

In 1798, the British confronted the possibility that Egypt could become a lynchpin in a French trading empire or become the platform for an Indian invasion. The parallel was irresistible due to the coincidence of Napoleon's extraordinary ambition with a geo-political place of acute historical and contemporary relevance. The different treatments of the parallel in the three pieces by Irwin show – in microcosm - how Napoleon provoked a "hardening" of Alexander's paradigm from a geo-politically detached, rhetorical attack to a guide for imperial strategy (the two pieces immediately above and one in the previous section from 1799). Irwin did not - at least initially – accept that Napoleon could match Alexander. The deployment of

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[694] Irwin 1798b: 17. Another reference to Ammon.
[695] Irwin 1798b: 18.

Alexander was to belittle Napoleon. The piece did contain a latent strategic point - that Napoleon was judged incapable of "doing an Alexander" - but the overriding strategic assessment was Irwin's view that the French were pursing another target. In the second piece, Irwin was forced to accept the "reality" of the parallel. As Irwin's rhetorical flourish gave way to moral opprobrium, Napoleon's ability to copy Alexander had been accepted as a reasonable possibility and it was countered by a hard-headed confidence in British arms. By 1799 and his later treatment of Egypt as a base for French commercial dominance, Irwin deployed Alexander as a means of thinking through the strategy of empire. He is seen to demonstrate precisely what the British might expect from the French in charge of Alexandria. As long as Napoleon remained an inadequate imitator, he was easily contained. As Napoleon made the parallel more believable, Alexander became an important paradigm with which to think strategically. This form of the paradigm was profoundly unsettling, in the context of a zero-sum game for empire. Irwin's works offered a novel conception of the danger posed to Britain by an imitator of Alexander. Portrayed as corrupting forces on the body politic, Hastings and Walpole were unnerving because they illustrated the danger of an Alexander within. Napoleon suggested that foreign powers adopting Alexander's modes and vision could also crush Britain's empire.

Two further examples demonstrate the consequences of Napoleon's superimposition over Alexander's template. One response was for writers to unpick the mechanism of the *comparatio* in an attempt to strip Napoleon of the comparison he was perceived to court. During 1812, the year of the defining campaign of his career, Napoleon had ruled France as Emperor for eight years and had been at war against Britain for most of that time. An anti-Bonaparte tract - *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great* - sought to ascertain whether it was just to call Napoleon "Great". The work was offered on the assumption that readers would be interested since 'it affects their political or individual concerns, but as it awakens that abhorrence of what is base and ignoble, and

that admiration of what is high and generous'.[696] The work represents an attempt to draw general principles on the morality and achievement of great men in Napoleon's time. Unlike William Temple's *Of Heroic Virtue*, over a hundred years earlier, the exercise was explicitly *ad hominem*.[697]

The method involved determining what was "great" and then comparing these axioms to the attributes of Napoleon. To prevent charges of being arbitrary, the author established a 'general acceptation of greatness.'[698] The author proposes that an objective viewpoint can only come from antiquity:

> I shall both illustrate my premises and confirm my conclusion, by the observations and comparisons of these personages of antiquity... [who] by the common consent of mankind have obtained the appellation Great.

The weight of historical judgement is unquestioned and Alexander is a crucial comparator for establishing a standard of greatness.[699] Conquest is noted as the 'principal and prevalent' means of achieving it and great may

> be justly applied to that individual who, by the exertion and application of superior abilities, has succeeded in brilliant enterprises, well deserving of his country and mankind in general.[700]

On this measure Napoleon is seen to equal any of his predecessors: 'the Star of Bonaparte has assuredly shone with lustre equal to that of any of the conquerors of antiquity'.[701] He even 'may have surpassed' the career of Alexander. But, the author argues, the title of "great" cannot merely be

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[696] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: Preface.
[697] See p. 80.
[698] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 1.
[699] He is cited due to his distance from the present and weight of opinion on his achievements, an attitude towards the classical past that is reminiscent of Botero and belies the dismantling of the ancient paradigm in the Augustan period- see chapter 2.
[700] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 5-6. The author does allow for greatness elsewhere but limits his examination to 'Princes, Statesman, and Generals.'
[701] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 6.

awarded for conducting conquest for conquests' sake: 'Caesar might have conquered Europe, and Alexander the world, without deserving of obtaining the appellation of Great men.'[702] Echoing Temple and Fielding and the other complainants of the last century, conquest was important, but could no longer be seen as appropriate qualification for "greatness".

But a significant twist had to be made to work this standard into an attack on Napoleon. When the early-eighteenth century authors considered in the second chapter lifted British heroes above Alexander, they did this by citing the anachronism of his ancient model of virtue. Using the concept of civic utility they then described a new British typology. This critic was trying to deny him access to the paradigm Napoleon and the public craved. This tract could not censure Alexander and Napoleon as immoral conquerors because that would confirm the parallel and Napoleon's potency. The author had already admitted that he could not deny that Napoleon's achievements were worthy of the comparison because his conquests were too formidable. The only way to separate him from his predecessor *and* undermine his claim to greatness was to shift the terms of the ancient paradigm itself:

> Let us examine some of the archetypes of the character we are investigating we should hardly contend that this extravagant ambition, his unjust inroads on the tranquillity of distant nations, his tears when he had no more worlds to conquer; gave to Alexander the title of Great.

Almost two hundred years previously, Giovanni Botero had claimed Alexander's extraordinary conquests as justification for the moniker "Great".[703] Reformed with a critique of the destructive nature of conquest, these were the same aspects of his life that Fielding and others had suggested as the reasons why he had been granted the title of great.[704] After denying

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[702] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 4-5.
[703] See p. 41.
[704] Chapter 2.3. These accusations were the same reasons that had given "great men" a bad repute in mid-eighteenth century.

the notion that such acts could have ever been considered as evidence for his greatness, the author moves instead to consider Alexander's internal virtues:

> we should more easily suppose him to have owed that appellation to the energy and sobriety of his youthful career to his piety, to his intrepidity and self-collection to his appetency for information.

Having established Alexander as the measure of his greatness, the author has to revert to his particular virtues – energy and piety - to keep Alexander out of reach of his imitator.[705]

The work then utilises this adapted paradigm to prevent Napoleon from reaching "greatness". First, the author plays down Alexander's excesses to avoid undermining his credibility. To complement this tactic, he emphasizes the crimes of Napoleon. For example,

> in the cool contemplative murder of an unfortunate Prince [Duc d'Erghien], he thought to outdo the passionate assassin of Cleitus, and the judge of the innocent Callisthenes.[706]

Where Alexander was merely passionate, Napoleon was calculating and 'without possessing any of their virtues...' had '...far surpassed the outrages of the eminent personages.'[707] One result of this approach is a contorted analogy using the story of the Gordian Knot.[708] After defeat at the battle of the Nile, Napoleon abandoned his troops in Egypt and returned to Paris to seize power. He was in the author's estimation committing the worst sin of a great man:

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[705] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 11-13. The rubric 'youthful', further has to be used to remove the spectre of Alexander's later excesses, although they cannot remained unmentioned. Fortunately, 'the follies and vices' are part of a 'subsequent life' after the conquest of Darius meaning they can be removed from his 'legitimate' pursuit of conquest under the auspices of the leadership of Greece.

[706] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 14-15.

[707] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 15.

[708] Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 18.1-4; Arr. *Anab.* 2.3; Curt. 3.1.14-18; Just. *Epit.* 11.7.3-16.

> Let the conquerors of the world hide their diminished heads;- it was deemed in Alexander the soldierlike and brilliant resource of acknowledged impotence, to cut a knot which he was unable to untie.

Like the Macedonian, Napoleon takes a 'bold' course. Unlike Alexander's bold move at Gordian, Napoleon's action was seen as neither brave nor loyal to his men:

> But here a much bolder solution of difficulties presents itself to us; Bonaparte snatches the fruits of victory, and arrives at the goal of ambition, and leaves his faithful followers to untwist the threads of hazardous enterprise and surrounding danger as they might.[709]

When the tide turned against him in Egypt, Napoleon's "bold" course was to flee to the intrigues of court politics; his men are instead left to "cut the knot" of the failed Egyptian campaign.[710] In a twist on the admiration of his metier evident in the writings of his school-friend (section 4.1), Napoleon was seen to be "boldly" running away to the realm of politics, and this is to the detriment of his men and his claim on greatness.[711] The author finished by matching Napoleon unfavourably with a list of characteristics of great men - courage, generosity or foresightedness – that were previously part of the panoply of the virtuous prince. The inevitable conclusion is that: 'the present ruler of the French empire had no legitimate claim to the appellation of a "Great Man"'. To downplay Napoleon, the author has to find a way of

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[709] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 18.

[710] *An Enquiry into the Justice of the pretension of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Appellation of "Great"* 1812: 18. The work goes on to describe the scene in Paris as 'a tissue of politics just arrived at that happy degree of intricacy which can be cut, but cannot be unravelled, a state of affairs ripe for and inviting to the domination of a favourite general.'

[711] Similar comparisons follow with Caesar, portraying Napoleon as unthinking in the pursuit of power and lacking in the stuff of greatness He satirises Napoleon's 'noble sacrifice of the feelings of the man and the general at the altar of public good.' Ironically the most apt comparison for Napoleon is found to be another Argead King, Alexander's father: 'Were we to point out any other ruler, conqueror or statesman of ancient history, whom Bonaparte resembles, we should say that he may peruse many prototypes of his character in the intrigues and armed chicanery of a Philip of Macedon, in the perfidies and atrocities of a Hannibal, in the imprudence and malignity of a Tiberius.' He even produced a short appendix to fill out the comparison to Philip - (1812: 56, 66-72).

making the ancients "great" without citation of their conquests as an intrinsic measure of their greatness. He does so by considering Alexander's internal virtues in a way akin to the seventeenth century moralists.[712] The bending of the criteria and the analogical gymnastics illustrate the discomfort inherent when associating and then disassociating Napoleon and Alexander. This work captures the need to accommodate the obvious similitude, but also an imperative to diminish Napoleon. Handling Napoleon's challenging character was incidentally inspiring a recovery of Alexander and the idea of great men.

If his character was redeemed, Alexander's conquests were here still tarnished by the notion of criminal conquest. When a similar attempt to belittle Napoleon took place in the context of the Egyptian debacle, the difference between the two could be accentuated more easily with recourse to Robertson's thesis on Alexander's commercialism. In December, when Napoleon's defeat, if not the army's destruction, was already apparent, an editorial was published in the *European Magazine* under the heading *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* (1798). The magazine published by loyalist James Asperne, who printed vast numbers of anti-Bonaparte broadsides and pamphlets designed to trumpet British character and warn of the French threat to the nation.[713] The magazine took the opportunity to place Bonaparte firmly in the shadow of his predecessor. This was not before acknowledgement of the success and popularity of Bonaparte: 'the rapidity of Buonaparte's victories, and the uncommon eccentricity of his mind, have brought him before the public eye as an object of much admiration.'[714] The perceived divided loyalties in the audience - provoked by the Jacobin 'cause he espouses' - reveals the schizophrenic public attitude, and the discomfort

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[712] More research would be required to demonstrate whether this was a phenomenon unique to Napoleon's image.
[713] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 369. See Semmel (2004: 41-3) for Asperne's widespread anti-Bonaparte propaganda and editorial position.
[714] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 369.

of commentators in reacting to him.[715] Like Irwin, the author wished to damn Napoleon, but must do it in a way that still allowed him to pander to public expectation. Hence, the author was obliged to honour the admiration for the 'blaze of his general character' and feels that the audience will be satisfied with 'no less a man to compare him to, than *Alexander the Great*.' The comparison with Alexander was seemingly irresistible to the British imagination. In the author's opinion, the results will only 'degrade' the 'Grecian hero' because Napoleon was falsely evoking Alexander's ideals.[716]

The work deconstructs Napoleon's achievements and character through a series of antiphonal paragraphs, one proposing an aspect of Alexander as a model, the next answering with an example of Napoleon failing to ascend to such an ideal. Their only undeniable bond is conceded to be ambition. This is enough to account for the premise – that they should be compared – without suggesting any flattering similitude. Alexander's ambition springs from *'heroic principles*', while Bonaparte's comes from '*intrigue, dissimulation, ingratitude* and *personal vanity*'. The final word is that Alexander's ambition is tempered by many virtues; Napoleon's is affected by '*dissimulation* and *violence'*. The 'leading traits' of each examined are selective, intended to match the worst of the general with the best of his predecessor. Hence, Alexander who displays '*fidelity* and *gratitude*' meets Bonaparte who knows these qualities, but betrayed these ideals during the revolution when he betrayed the King under whom he was taught them.[717] Similarly, Napoleon's marriage to Josephine and his treatment of the Pope during his time in Italy are compared without favour to Alexander's marriage to Roxanna, the chivalrous treatment of the defeated and dying King Darius and the respect shown to Darius' family.[718] To defeat Napoleon, the author praises an aspect of Alexander's life that had once been considered inadequate to confirm his claim to greatness.

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[715] I.e. Jacobinism.
[716] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 369.
[717] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 369.
[718] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 369, 370.

The comparison necessitates some glossing over of less salubrious aspects of Alexander's character. On the manner of Alexander's conquests, he notes his magnanimity in victory, 'except [when] attended with very particular and aggravating circumstances'.[719] Regarding his dignity in office he displays humility, 'if we except his calling himself the son of Jupiter' which is a 'political' act.[720] This aspect of his behaviour had been vilified in the previous two centuries, although it is possible that this was relatively uncontroversial after similar arguments had been made by Montesquieu, Lyttelton, Mitford and others.[721] The religious policy of the Egyptian campaign, recorded in detail in previous editions of the same magazine, is similarly twisted. The article mentions how Napoleon *deceives* the Egyptians by 'insisting he is a good *Musselman',* while previously attending masses in Italy. Alexander, however, *sincerely* attends to his own religion.

The final portion of the work turns to the theme of commerce and the objectives of the respective expeditions. The invasion of India by Alexander is portrayed as a means of extending commerce. With an idea garnered from his appreciation of Tyre,

> a view to secure this commerce, and to establish a station for it, preferable in many respects to that of Tyre, as soon as he completed the conquest of Egypt, he founded a city near one of the mouths of the Nile...and with such admirable discernment was the situation of it chosen, Alexandria soon became the greatest trading city in the ancient world and notwithstanding many revolutions in empire, continued, during eighteenth centuries, to be the chief seat of commerce with India.[722]

Almost straight from the pages of William Robertson, Alexander's conquests are seen not as an attempt to overturn the sovereign rights of local princes, since he 'only drew from this hold [over nations] and magnificent design that extension of commerce which he thought necessary for the support and

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[719] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 369.
[720] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 370.
[721] Chapter 3.2.
[722] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 371.

aggrandisement of his other dominions'. Contrasted with this vision for enterprise is Napoleon, who is a '*bombastical* herald of a *bombastical Government*,' carrying with him military despotism.[723] Continuing the theme of dissimulation, the cossetted aim of conquering India is seen to be masquerading as an intention to punish the Beys of Egypt for crimes against the French: Napoleon's invasion is characterised as 'founded on *fraud* and *injustice*'.[724]

By drawing upon similar themes to William Robertson's, Napoleon's expedition is seen to be a fraudulent attempt at *imitatio* that fails to recapture the ancient spirit of the Alexandrian ideal. The work rehabilitates Alexander thanks to its desire to show Napoleon as dissimilar from his idol. The personal ambition criticised throughout the previous century is refashioned in his enlightened promotion of trade. The previous chapter demonstrated how the test of imperial utility encouraged a reassessment of Alexander's paradigm, if not always his person. Charles XII had once confirmed the criminality of certain conquerors; conversely, in the attempt to mitigate the claustrophobic effects of having Napoleon as an antagonist, there was a clear articulation of the special place of a visionary like Alexander. The legacy of Napoleon would mean geo-political relevance and a measure of redemption for Alexander.[725]

4.5. AFTERWORD: UN ALEXANDRE MANQUÉ

After the capitulation of the remnants of the army in Egypt, Britain acquired the spoils of Napoleon's archaeological endeavours, including the Rosetta

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[723] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 371.

[724] *Parallel Between Alexander and Buonaparte* 1798: 371.

[725] This differentiation between the two was not present during the assessments of Dundas, but the same rationale was being used. Perhaps the difference between the criticism here and a mere few months earlier can be accounted for by knowledge of Napoleon's defeat, although Irwin was prepared to maintain the parallel as a warning. The legacy of the expedition would still be of great import to scholarship, not least because it provoked the flourishing of Egyptology and the decipherment of hieroglyphics. The cover of the discipline defining *Description de l'Égypte* (1809 - a catalogue of the material uncovered by the expedition initially in 23 volumes) presented Napoleon as Alexander aboard a war chariot in one final nod to the classical "models" for the invasion.

Stone and an ancient sarcophagus from the Attarine mosque in Alexandria. The latter became the focus of some academic intrigue. Edward Clarke (1769–1822), an antiquary widely travelled in the Levantine region, became convinced it was the casket that once held Alexander's body. His findings were recorded in a dissertation entitled *The Tomb of Alexander* (1805). Dispatched by Lord Hutchinson, commander of the British forces in Egypt, Clarke records that he was tasked with assessing the importance of the antiquities available to the British under the terms of the settlement.[726] He entered Alexandria immediately after its surrender to the British, and from local merchants he "established" that the French had that in their possession a sarcophagus they strongly believed to have been the 'Tomb of Alexander'. It was removed from a French medical ship before being sent back to stand in the forecourt of the British Museum.[727] Clarke's dissertation provided exhaustive proofs of this point, ranging from consideration of the classical sources to accounts of travellers to the region in more recent centuries. Clarke was at pains to strengthen his case for the tomb's origins, which served to bolster the case for Clarke's concomitant concern: the sense of Britain's victory in claiming the sarcophagus.[728]

Clarke accused the French leadership of hiding the true nature of the artefact to prevent it falling into the hands of their vanquishers. Clarke was eager, like Irwin, to place Napoleon in his "proper" place on matters of *imitatio.* According to Clarke, even the man who "found" the casket - Vivant

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[726] Clarke 1805: 37-40. His study encompassed the history of the Tomb from construction up until the most recent English travellers to Alexandria to which is attached an assessment of the type of stone by a geologist, pinned to references to the texts of Diodorus, Curtius and later scholars, all of which point to the local importance of the tomb and surrounding temple of St Athanasius.

[727] After the decipherment of hieroglyphs, it was determined to be that of Nectanebo II (Chugg 2004: 178).

[728] Clarke over-emphasises the extent of its contemporary veneration and the evidence is at best circumstantial. As Saunders (2006: 140) argues 'it allowed him to strengthen the case for the tradition of Muslim worship of the sarcophagus and thus reinforce the view that this was Alexander's tomb.' Saunders also notes that 'Clarke's account casts the British (and himself) in the role of the tomb's saviour, whose actions denied Napoleon a propaganda coup.'

Denon – was trying to hide its provenance and true purpose.[729] Since Napoleon intended to be interned inside it, Clarke pointedly reduces him to a mere failed imitator:

> To complete the mockery of Buonoparte's imitation of the son of Philip, the same tomb that had once enclosed the body of that hero would have been reserved for the bones of his mimic.[730]

After ridiculing Napoleon's attempts to commandeer his legacy, Clarke instead claims Alexander for Britain by exploitation the patriotic value of the discovery, associating Britain's triumph with the prestige of Alexander.

> A British army came to give life and liberty to the oppressed inhabitants of Egypt; and the Tomb of the greatest Conqueror the world ever knew devolved, by right of conquest, to their victorious arms.[731]

By transporting the casket to Bloomsbury, the British had proof not only that they were saviours of Egypt, but also that they were successors to the world's greatest conqueror. Irwin's was a personal account, but nevertheless this represents a significant utilisation of Alexander for the purposes of British patriotism. Whatever the historical accuracy of Clarke's claims, the

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[729] Clarke (1805: 24) notes, 'his [Denon's] words, like the hieroglyphs which so much engaged his attention, contain a meaning beyond their common acceptation; reserved, doubtless, for the initiated. The tomb is no longer a theme of triumph to his countrymen. Enough has been said to convince them of its importance; and the rest may be reserved till the moment arrives, when, according to their *moderate* expectations, the invasions and conquest of this country shall have restored the precious relic to their hands.' Denon (1803: 28-29) describes it as lying 'in the centre of this court, a little octagon temple encloses a cistern of Egyptian workmanship, and incomparable beauty both on account of its form, and of the innumerable hieroglyphs with which it is covered, inside and out. This monument, which appears to be a sarcophagus of ancient Egypt, might perhaps be illustrated by volumes of dissertations.' Saunders' (2006: 133) interpretation of this object, given the absence of Alexander, inexplicably bases the French reaction to the find on this account, arguing 'The French considered the Sarcophagus a potent symbol of imperial possession, much as Ptolemy had two thousand years before. Acquiring the tomb *would ally Napoleon's ambition and achievements with those of Alexander*, and all France would bathe in reflected glory.' Supposedly the French may have known about its purported origins through conversations with locals. This may be plausible given the fact that Edward Clarke later ascertained local traditions on the origins of the tomb, but should not be the basis for such an inference. See Chugg (2004:174-8) for a similar summary of these events.

[730] Clarke 1805: 29

[731] Clarke 1805: 29.

museum audience had tangible proof of British success, those reading it would be left in no doubt who could claim Alexander's legacy through victory in Egypt.

4.6. CONCLUSION

Before 1798, the British relationship with Alexander was already complex and occasionally unnerving. Napoleon provoked a febrile refashioning of the *comparatio*. These examples start from a concern that was significantly different from any previous. Writers were formerly happy to let Alexander stand in for the "enemy" of Britain (imagined or real), or as "Other" to British values in order to make an attack on Hastings. Napoleon was an opponent who revelled in his *imitatio* and, unlike Charles XII he was not a foreign conqueror who could be considered with detached bemusement. Previous uses of Alexander provided the requisite moral "Other" to define distinctly British values, even if that was controversial in the case of Hastings. The example of Marlborough shows this clearly: he was better than Caesar and Alexander in terms of his civic virtue, and any appreciation of Alexander's success served to enhance Marlborough's military reputation. Now Britain had a dangerous enemy that aspired to Alexander's methods. The first simple step was to place Britain above both Napoleon and Alexander martially, as in the case of *The Devil and the Consul*. More awkwardly, Napoleon also had to be separated from Alexander. Granting him straightforward *comparatio* would acquiesce to his wishes and accept his potency. Irwin, for example, was not arguing for Britain to co-opt Alexander, but he was not comfortable with having Britain's enemy associated with him either.

Semmel notes that 'there was great narrative satisfaction to be formed in reading the Napoleonic wars as a story of single combat between Napoleon and Britain ... this single combat was a test: a trial of British character, a

confirmation of British greatness, an interrogation of British weakness'.[732] The example of Alexander shows the variety of nodes of reference in this conflict narrative. The canon of Alexander's flaws and virtues solicited him as a *comparatio* to fail against or as a sinister co-conspirator, tainting the enemy. In the case of Egypt this was manifest in anxiety for trade as each nation looked with animosity at the other's assets or ambitions. Through Alexander, Britain exorcised the threat of Bonaparte as a conqueror. Semmel argues that the reason why British responses to Napoleon are so polyvalent was that 'Napoleon had broken free of historical models...' he was a 'contradiction' and 'unclassifiable'.[733] He is aptly described by these adjectives. But the examples in section 4.1 especially demonstrate just how Alexander allowed this freak to be historicized, to appear, if not normal, then classifiable. The work of Irwin, *The Devil and the Consul* and Edward Clarke also demonstrate how such *comparatio* enabled an enemy to be conquerable. Through painting Napoleon as a ridiculous and flawed imitator, his threat was likewise reduced. Napoleon ultimately failed to match the achievements of Alexander and challenge Britain's commercial empire. But defeat was a near miss and the comparisons made during the Egypt crisis show considerable discomfort.[734]

The association between the two was itself to have a lasting legacy. The invasion occasioned a convergence of places and personages: India - which had to be protected; Alexandria - a location proven to be the font of commercial dominance; an ancient conqueror - credited with connecting the two and sowing the seeds of Alexandria's potency, and, finally, a modern imitator of proven success and coruscating ambition. This combination resounded with danger for the British and the relief at his failure was

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[732] Semmel 2004: 4.

[733] Semmel 2004: 33.

[734] As Semmel (2004: 2) argues, 'As general, consul and emperor – and then as exile – Napoleon was an object of fascination for British writers and artists and for the British people generally. Though many Britons demonized Napoleon, their hatred was often tinged with anxiety and doubt about their own nation's condition. He continues, noting that 'for a great many observers both friend and foe, Napoleon served as a lens through which to scrutinize Britain's own identity, government and history.'

palpable when Nelson was pronounced in parliament as the 'Saviour of Mankind'.[735] The Earl of Darnley also asked,

> at what period of history has the commerce of any country been so great, so extended, so universal? Our inveterate enemies, by their very attempt to injure us in our valuable Eastern possessions, have annihilated the small remains of their almost extinguished commerce...and restored...undisputed command of the Mediterranean, the lucrative trade of Turkey and the Levant.[736]

The once heavily criticised *universal* land empire of Spain and France was here reinvented in the universal British *imperium* of trade. This comment provides anecdotal evidence of the pan-continental view of empire that had been adopted thanks to Napoleon's threat.[737] Briant has previously argued that in the work of Robertson, Alexander showed Britain the way to India and a role as a respectful guardian of its culture and collaborator in commercial prosperity. Napoleon brought immediacy to abstract thoughts regarding Alexander's legacy, since he made Britain actively consider the strategic problems of the lands between Egypt and India. Napoleon's invasion was a stark reminder that whatever the nature of British governance in India, Britain first and foremost needed to protect its empire.

Napoleon was an important pivot in an already shifting paradigm. He further provoked two significant changes in Britain's relationship with Alexander. His stunning move towards Egypt in 1798 provoked consideration of what 'land' based conquest could achieve against British sea-power.[738] The predominance of sea-trade and the comparative strategic unimportance of the lands over which Alexander had triumphed, had meant that his paradigm had previously served primarily as a moral case study in the morality of empire. Alongside the focus upon India and Alexander

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[735] Tyrwhitt 1798: 1561.
[736] Darnley 1798: 1532.
[737] Somewhat over optimistically considering wars against Napoleon would go on until 1815.
[738] As Ingram (1978: 17) notes 'for most of the eighteenth century, Britain's political interests in the near east had taken second place to her trade; even when the danger from foreigners had been commercial, symbolised by the spectre of the overland trade. After 1798 Britain's priorities were reversed: political interests formally took precedence.'

precipitated by Hastings, the growing recognition of the importance of Alexander strategically was sharpened by Napoleon's invasion; Alexander's conquest became geo-politically relevant. The second was a growing recognition of the importance of Great men as actors across the imperial landscape of Asia. Napoleon's considerable ambitions - particularly the fear that they were not quite as hubristic as they might seem - would make consideration of 'great,' conquering men necessary for those in Whitehall and Calcutta. The final chapter will discuss how British invocations of Alexander would inspire as well as unnerve long after Napoleon had ceased to be a threat.

5. CONCLUSION

The association between Napoleon and Alexander was to have its own afterlife. Before offering some general conclusions (section 5.2), this chapter will demonstrate that Napoleon's invasion would have an impact upon British imperial strategy. It is not the aim of this section to assess the widespread reception and historiography of Alexander during the first half of the nineteenth century.[739] Nor will it provide a full assessment of Napoleon's impact upon the reception of Alexander in this period.[740] Rather, it stands as evidence of the lingering effects of the eighteenth-century Alexander in the nineteenth. It demonstrates one consequence of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt: the seriousness with which the prospect of an invasion of India was taken thanks to the connection made between Napoleon, Alexander and contemporary empire in the British imagination.

5.1. THE TURN TO ALEXANDER

It was obvious to British policy makers in Whitehall and Calcutta after (if not before and during) the invasion of Egypt, that India and the lands between the two were an important strategic locus of empire. A common trope of modern historiography on the British Empire is that the late-eighteenth century was seminal in the process of shifting Britain's emphasis away from the Americas. The specific dates vary: the original thesis of the "swing to the east" by Vincent Harlow identified this process as occurring in the 1760s, while others place it after the loss of the American colonies.[741] Marshall names 1798 as the key year for the change in focus, not so much away from the North Atlantic world, but towards the recognition of the strategic importance of the lands between India and the European powers.[742] This argument can be applied more narrowly to the strategic conceptualisation of

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[739] A topic explored by Hagerman (2009). See also Vasunia (2007) and Ball (2012).
[740] Vasunia (2013), which was published after this thesis had been completed, has a full analysis of this material.
[741] Harlow 1952-64.
[742] Marshall (1999: 1-18).

Alexander. The relationship established in 1798 between the two extraordinary conquerors would have a palpable legacy in the following fifty years. Although 1798 was no simple fulcrum, after this point there was a persistent tendency to predict that opponents would "do an Alexander" and sweep down into British India. In concert with a clear shift in British attitudes towards the lands between the Levant in the west and the Indus in the east, British geopolitics in the post-Napoleon world referenced Alexander as a strategic trope.[743] The "Great Game" against the expansionist Tsars of Russia was a significant macro-political concern for Britain's involvement in Asia during the nineteenth century. It was played out sporadically under the shadow of Alexander and, occasionally, Napoleon.[744]

Facing the apparent decline of the Ottoman Empire and the potential exploitation of the Levant, Persia or Afghanistan by European rivals, British policy in Asia was one of active defence, intermingled with periods of disinterest. The threat of an invasion of India by Tsar Paul in concert with Napoleon in 1801 and subsequent fears of an invasion by a French and Russian alliance with the aid of either of the regional powers led to British diplomacy across the region and a series of alliances with Persia.[745] The defeat of France in 1815 left Britain and Russia as undisputed powers in Europe. With the consolidation of British India by the Governor-General, Arthur Wellesley, and the Tsar's expansion south into the region between the Caspian Sea and China, Britain and Russia became the dominant European powers in Asia. In the immediate aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, the fear of a European invasion of India was absent, but in the late 1820s, the

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[743] A phenomenon to be delineated from his role as a general, morally inflected, geopolitical trope of conquest as deployed during the trial of Hastings. See chapter 3.3.

[744] For overview of this strategy, see Goldfrank (1994: 48-55).

[745] Gillard (1977) gives a detailed political history of this period. Known as the "Eastern Question," see Goldfrank (1994: 40). This is not to suggest that commercial interests and political interests were always the same, nor that the policy of the British Government and the Company in Bengal were concordant or coordinated; in fact they were often estranged and inchoate – see Yapp (1981: 7). Montstuart Elphinstone led a mission to negotiate an alliance with Shuja Shah Durani of Kabul as part of a concerted attempt to secure a diplomatic purchase of the regions intervening between India and Egypt - Hagerman (2009: 345).

government of Prime Minster Wellington and President of the Board of Control, Lord Ellenborough, came to a broad agreement on Russia and India. First, Russia had plans for expansion. Second, these were a direct threat to the British Empire in India. Finally, there was a need to manipulate Central Asia as a strategic buttress against the Russian threat.[746]

This emerged in the context of Russia's significant military and diplomatic victories against the Persians and Ottomans, which led to many commentators writing about the threat and possible solutions.[747] The soldier George De Lacy Evans (1787-1870) wrote *On the Designs of Russia* (1828) to illustrate the latent danger posed by Russia. He made comparisons between Napoleon's and Alexander's modes of expansion. These were characterised as '*personal*' acquisitions: Napoleon's hubris in attacking Russia caused the collapse of his empire, while Alexander's successors suffered the dismemberment of an empire too rapidly acquired due to the genius of one individual. By way of contrast, Evans is keen to point out the dissimilarity of the Russian empire, which he considers to be the result of 'national' conquests, based upon 'overwhelming powers' (i.e. size and a massive population).[748] He judged Russia to be another Rome because of its consistent attention to military institutions and not just the actions of prominent monarchs. Evans notes that 'the Russians themselves know better – they compare their empire to that of the Romans, and with infinitely more reason.'[749] Napoleon was treated as a failed imitator of Alexander by his British critics.[750] In ruling out the comparison with Alexander, Russia was

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[746] This outline is based upon Gillard (1977: 7-42). Whether Russia was actually planning what was suspected is controversial, but irrelevant to the current work.

[747] See Hagerman (2009) for a detailed account of the works of various British diplomats and soldiers, including John Malcolm and Mountstuart Elphinstone.

[748] De Lacy Evans 1828: 95-7. The idea that Alexander and his father were 'extra-ordinary' men is supported by Alexander's ability to taken on the Persian character, and the transformative powers of Philip on the Macedonian peoples, evidenced by quoting Alexander's speech to the mutinous army at Opis.

[749] De Lacy Evans 1828: 99-100. The extent to which Evans is intent upon making the disassociation with Alexander, suggested that it had become a trope elsewhere to suggest a similitude.

[750] See chapter 4.4 and 4.5 especially.

made to appear more dangerous than either Napoleon or Alexander. Through the contrast with the brazen and short lived success of these conquerors, Evans' aim was to provide a warning of the subtler and more dangerous imperial Leviathan on the threshold of British India.

Evans' follow up piece - *On the Practicability of the Russian Invasion of India* (1829) – restated the case for Russia having fixed its sights on India. Evans was more explicit about the means by which the Russians could achieve their objectives and the steps that could be taken to prevent them. For strategic and geographical orientation, Evans, on occasion, provides detail from Alexander's campaigns: they are used as comparison for the possible logistics of any invasion and Alexander is mentioned in passing at the head of a canon of previous invaders of India.[751] The only extended discussion is the laboriously narrated account of Alexander's activities in Bactria and Sogdiana in a chapter that focuses on the predicted Russian campaigns in the same region. When assessing the degree of resistance expected against any advance along the Oxus River, the difficulties and reverses of the three years of Alexander's campaigns are offered as evidence.[752] In addition to the labours undertaken to control the uprising of Spitamenes, Evans notes that his fortunate death prevented further problems for the Macedonians. The fact that Alexander was wounded twice, and had to take a local wife (Roxanna) to soothe the locals, further illustrates the difficulties that Alexander had faced.[753]

In comparison to the three 'arduous and toilsome' campaigns and the 'bravest antagonists' with whom the Macedonians tussled, Evans emphasises that it took a mere ten days for Alexander's army to cross the Hindu Kush and proceed down into the Indus valley (the gateway to the Indian plain).[754] As well as the strategic implication that this mountain range may not provide

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[751] De Lacy Evans (1829: 80) for the altars of Alexander; De Lacy Evans (1829: 95) for a note on the burning of the baggage at Kabul (Plutarch); De Lacy Evans 1829: 78, 103
[752] De Lacy Evans 1829: 49. He spends six pages recounting them (as opposed to four describing the current condition of the Khivians in the same section).
[753] De Lacy Evans 1829: 51-2.
[754] De Lacy Evans 1829: 52.

an overly effective barrier to an external force, the main point of the extended description was to emphasize how different the contemporary peoples of Bactria were to their predecessors. Evans notes, 'how fallen the natives of these countries now are in strength of character and national spirit, will be best exemplified by the following details [of Alexander's campaigns]'.[755] Examining the resistance to Alexander establishes a crude analogy for the reaction of the Afghans to any invader. The primary reasons given for their success against Alexander are the strength of their institutions and their unity. In the conclusion, having discussed the impossibility of opposing any invasion with massed British forces, Evans argues for a policy of attempting to unify Afghanistan to match the state that resisted Alexander so successfully.[756]

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[755] De Lacy Evans 1829: 52. The amount of detail taken from Alexander's conquests was clearly superfluous to making a claim about the weakness of contemporary forces, given that Evans had access to reports written by Russian experts.

[756] De Lacy Evans 1829: 907. He further notes that 'it would seem desirable, also, to make an effort towards giving unity and stability to the Caubul state. That this might not be altogether unfeasible, may be deduced from the opinion of our Envoy thither, that even if we admit the inferiority of the Afghaun institutions to those of the more vigorous governments of other Asiatic countries, we cannot but be struck with the vast superiority of the materials they afford for the construction of a national constitution.' This was not the only remedy: De Lacy Evans points out the need for permanent representatives in Afghanistan and future expeditions by British officers to detail the landscape. Although it is difficult to argue for a direct correlation between this work and subsequent policy, Ellenborough was convinced enough by the general direction of Russia and need for an apt response to write to Wellington on the need to secure Persia. His second recommendation was the need for intelligence in these regions. The 1830s saw the government in India initiate various missions to the west and northwest to gather intelligence in order to combat the threat of the Tsars (Wright 2001: 149-50; 162). Expeditions like that of Alexander Burnes were to report on the geography and trade of Bokhara, and were very much part of the competition for commercial and military dominance. As Hagerman argues, for Burnes there was a tangible sense of inspiration (manifest in Burnes' giddy excitment at various similtudes of the expeditions) and being "led" by his predecessor across the landscape Alexander had once travelled; the textual guides were the ancient accounts of Alexander's conquests (Hagerman 2009: 381-385). Alexander was not just a guide for the author. Burnes (1835:14) noted the landscape according to its relevance for Alexander's conquests as a means of engaging with his readership, a way into the landscape for those of more detached interest: '...in the course of my narrative, I shall endeavour to identify the modern Indus with the features of remoter times. If successful in the enquiry, we shall add to our amusement, and the interest of the chronicles [the works of Arrian etc] themselves.' Britain would go on to annex Sinde (1839-43), Beloochistan (1876), and divided up Persia at the beginning of the 19th century – Hyam (1993: 32, 204, 265). Mentions of Alexander occur in Kinneir (1818: 114; 120; 124) and Pottinger (1816: 9; 264; 381).

Another use of Alexander as a means of interpreting Russia's intentions, occurred in a debate on Polish independence in the early 1830s. He was used as an indication of the threat to India from Russia's expansionist policy which was judged to present a clear and present danger to British interests. The speaker was the writer, traveller and MP for Sheffield, James Buckingham who commented upon what he witnessed as the 'vastness of ambition' of Russia, manifest in the supposed presence of Russian agents between 'Constantinople and Calcutta'. He raised the spectre that

> a Russian army might find its way to India, when it was remembered that Alexander of Macedon had penetrated across the Tigris and Euphrates, given battle to Porus on the banks of the Indus, and left colonies behind him in Bactria, to perpetuate the memory of his Indian conquests. But it was not on the route to India only that Russian agency was employed. In every country in Europe and Asia, as well as in America, were to be found men of acuteness and intelligence employed by the Russian government, all acting as promoters of one great, general, and systematic plan, to promote Russian interests in every quarter, and to leave nothing undone that could advance or promote Russian influence and Russian dominion.[757]

In comparison to De Lacy Evans' detailed account, this was a vague assertion of precedent and instead struck a general threatening note. The trope of Alexander's invasion was enough to demonstrate the threat of Russian expansion, but Buckingham – like Evans - was keen to present the argument that the Russians used more insidious means. So abundant was the idea and so seriouly was it taken that a number of studies were conducted to confirm both the motives and means of any Russian expansion. In one item, Lt. Col. Francis Rawdon Chesney (1789-1872), who had travelled widely in the Euphrates region, refuted the danger and advised using economic and diplomatic influence in Persia as the cheapest and most effective means of maintaining a strategic buttress against a Russian invasion since: 'it [Persia]

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[757] Buckingham 1830: 455.

is fortified by the natural difficulties of the country, almost all foreign invasions having failed, except that of Alexander'.[758] Chesney's warning against letting slip the British diplomatic position in Persia was made on the basis that any foreign encroachment that managed to succeed in the country carried the inevitability of a successful Indian invasion.[759] Alexander opened up the possibility of invasion and, although the implication was that the Tsar could not replicate his feats directly, Russia could imitate their considerable consequences. That the Russians did not share the methods or capabilities of their predecessor was also explained in parliament by Lord Dudley Stuart. He pointedly remarked that the previous gains of Russia had 'not been achieved by conquests such as those of Alexander,' but by creeping political and military dominance. Echoing Evans, he argued that Russia's designs could be insidiously dangerous and lasting.[760] That Alexander *had* managed such an invasion was used as the entry point to establish credibility for such a perceived scheme. The inexorable logic - fixed in the mind by Alexander - was that any occupation of Persia was to be followed by an invasion of India. It may not have been Alexander Britain was facing, but Russia was still an Alexander-sized threat.

Although initially unconcerned, the new Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerstone (1830-41) came to the same conclusion as Ellenborough. He set about protecting Afghanistan and Persia as part of a trans-continental strategy against Russia. This resulted in military action in the late 1830s. In response to Russian provision of aid for the Shah of Iran's attempt to reclaim the disputed city of Herat – seen as the gateway to India - a plan was devised

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[758] Chesney 1836:493 (First published in 1833). In lieu of a firm attribution I have assumed this to be the work of Francis Rowden Chesney the geographer and surveyor of various rivers in Asia.

[759] Chesney 1836: 467-8.

[760] Dudley Stuart 1836: 633. This idea is inexplicably inverted in Goldfrank (1994: 50). The direct military threat was soon acknowledged as a strategic fallacy. McNeill (1854: 104) warned against Russian control of Persia. His prominent treatise on the subject – first published in 1836 and into four editions by 1854 - notes that in fact 'From her present frontier, Russia not only cannot invade India, but she cannot exert in that country her disturbing influence.'

to secure a united Afghanistan under a pro-British puppet. This was to be the fomer ruler - Shah Shuja - who would take the place of the encumbant Dost Mohammed. The war in Afghanistan (1839 – 1842) built upon the previous decade's careful intelligence and concern, but after inital victories the campaign would turn into a costly disaster and hardly any members of the English garrison would make it home.[761] Before this catastrophe, there was a celebration of the successful campaign to Herat by the expeditionary force, led by Lord Auckland George Eden the Governor-general of India. In Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*, 'The Affghanistan (sic) Expedition' (1840), the historian Archibald Alison (anonymously) wrote at some length about its strategic and political context. Conceptualising a problem of empire as the need to continually expand to tackle external threats, the discrete and entwined use of Napoleon and Alexander aided his explanation of Russian expansion in the previous decades and his view of the task of defending India.[762] In strenghtenning the case for Britain exerting dominance in the region, Alison also quotes Alexander: '"as little .... as the heavens can admit two suns, can the earth admit two rulers of the east."'[763] But his central concern was strategic. After discussing Russian actions and designs upon India, he provides the inevitable trope of a conqueror's route into India:

> There is but one road by which any hostile army ever has, or ever can, approach India from the northward. Alexander the Great Timour, Genghis Khan, Nadir-Shah, have all penetrated Hindostan by the same route.

He then notes the route's use for mercantile communication and the strategic significance of Herat, a fact not lost, in this author's opinion, upon Napoleon:

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[761] Gilllard 1977: 43-55 for the narrative of these events.

[762] The overridding analogy with Napoleon was the need for constant advance in lieu of collapse (presumably after Machiavelli). [Alison] 1840: 241: 'equally with the empire of Napoleon in Europe, our first movement of serious retreat would be the commencement of our fall.'

[763] [Alison] 1840: A comment recorded by Just. *Epit.* 11.12.15 in connection with Alexander's offer to Darius that he should submit to Alexander's over-lordship.

> When Napoleon, in conjunction with the Emperor Paul, projected the invasion of our Indian possessions by a joint army of French infantry and Russian cossacks, the route marked out was Astrakan, Astrabad, Herat, Candahar, the Bolan pass, and the Indus, to Delhi. There can never be any other road overland to Delhi .... [the road] to the west parched and impassible deserts afford obstacles still more formidable, which the returning soldiers of Alexander overcame only with the loss of half their numbers.[764]

Alison's final thought was that any suggestion that India was not at risk from the north was now unsustainable, since the Russians had made Herat previously, and the British had joined the route from the south during the invasion of Afghanistan. As much as he was relieved at the British action, events had shown that 40,000 Russians could make the march from Astrakan to Calcutta – the powerful imaginary of Alexander's invasion of India now had the double proof of contemporary emulators.[765] The work exposes the limited appeal of the trope following Alexander's invasion: only because someone had actually done it could it be proven comprehensively that an invasion could take place and it had taken *two* major European powers to replicate the feat. While knowledge of Alexander's deeds did make for uncomfortable possibilities, Alison was still reticent to believe it possible *by just anybody*. Perhaps this was the result of a reluctance to match the enemy to the conquerer, as in the case of Irwin's reading of Napoleon. It was also an acknowledgement of the extraordinary position Alexander occupied in the imagination as a marker for martial achivement.

The Great Game finally brought Russia and Britain into direct military conflict some two decades later. As peace was being discussed in Paris and

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[764] This refers to the invasion of 1801 not 1798.

[765] Even if the immediate military threat was overstated, the idea that regions beyond the borders of India were still at risk from Russian influence, intent as it was upon eventually taking India, was a recurrent theme, for example in McNeill (1854:124-5) who notes: 'the idea of the Russian Elchee (ambassador), by his message, is to have a road to the English (India) and for this they are very anxious.' To achieve this they planned to 'excite all the nations and their tribes which occupy the country in opposing the views and the interests of England, and ultimately to contemplate an attack on the British position in India.'

Vienna following the Crimean War, the twelfth volume of George Grote's *History of Greece* (1856), which featured the campaigns of Alexander, was being published.[766] Passionate about Classical Athens above all, Grote had excoriated Alexander for destroying its freedom. The release date of his eagerly awaited concluding volume, however, meant that the largely negative portrait was often side-lined or ignored. The immediate critical response looked for lessons of imperial expediency over Grote's Athens-centric idealism.[767] These lessons included an appraisal of the current strategic situation: 'Mr Grote's volume comes opportunely to invite the attention of students to the military, geographic and political condition of regions which have perhaps altered as little in respect from what they were in Alexander's time as any regions in the world.'[768] With the failure in Afghanistan, Britain had now been engaged in two unsuccessful wars in areas in which Alexander had triumphed. Grote had incorporated into his work the growing literature on the region, compiled within the last few decades, which he used to reconstruct the geography of Alexander's campaign.[769] For commentators who had not been paying attention to the efforts of the East India Company in mapping and exploring these regions, the results were striking: 'the campaigns of Alexander prove incontestably that there is not only one route possible to an army invading India from the west, but half-a-dozen routes.' Again the idea of the Russians following Alexander and invading India is brought home to the reader as a real possibility:

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[766] The last volume on Alexander was published in March 1856 and the talks of a settlement were progressing by February of that year – *The Promised Peace* (1856c: 124-5).

[767] Grote wished explicitly to expound philosophical excellence as the measure of Greek culture, revelling in his mission to 'set forth the history of a people by whom the first spark was set to the dormant intellectual capacities of our nature'. - Grote (1842: Vol. I. viii). The popular press would dwell at length on the obvious comparisons between the rampant conqueror of Asia, and insipid British leadership, who would endure official enquiries and public damnation in the coming months.

[768] *'Grote's History of Greece - Volume XII'* 1856b: 249.

[769] Vasunia 2007: 99.

> [Grote's volume should] force upon the minds of all who read it, that the obstacles which intervene between the north west boundary of Persia and the Indus though undoubtedly great, only require military genius and the spirit of a conqueror to yield as they yielded two thousand years ago.[770]

In the battle for Asia, it was argued that the English must respect the example of Alexander. These writers feared a figure who could threaten such a feat, and recognise that their enemies could seek to emulate his example.

This tired cliché re-emerged in the context of a treaty with Persia a year later, showing that not all were so credulous. George Keppel, the Earl of Albermarle chided the latest proponents' fears of a Russian invasion, echoing Eyles Irwin's assessment of the problems inherent in invasion:

> Some people entertain a vague undefined idea of danger to our Indian empire from Russian aggression, but it can be shown how utterly groundless all such apprehensions are. It is asked why might not a great European power do that which Alexander the Great did three centuries before the Christian era? But those who put the question forget that Alexander had no artillery to carry with him, and that he had no commissariat, but drew his supplies from the wealthy population of the country. Moreover, Alexander was eight years in reaching the Indus, and when he got to the Hyphasis he had not to encounter a British force, but a body of Hindoos, and after all got no further than the bank of the river.[771]

Knowledge of Alexander was a significant factor in conceptualising the vulnerability of British India. Although there was no imperative to think with Alexander, from the work of Irwin to Albermarle there was a consistent need to deal in some manner with the strategic legacy of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt and Alexander's invasion of India.

The aftermath of the Crimean War also served to make Alexander the uncomfortable parallel for questions of British martial identity.[772] The first

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[770] *'Grote's History of Greece - Volume XII'* 1856b: 249.
[771] Albermarle (1857: 44).
[772] For the various post-war inquests and arguments for reform, see Royle (1999: 502-4 and passim). The nightmares of the first campaign were remembered in early February in *The*

war against a European power on Asian soil had resulted in an inglorious and costly stalemate brought home by pervasive war reportage that painted a stark picture of English disasters and the suffering of the soldiers.[773] The infamous charge of the Light Brigade was the most prominent of many scandals involving the incompetence of high ranking officers. In the pages of *The Spectator*, war correspondence had given way to coverage of various enquiries into the actions of leading men during the Crimean debacle. Amidst widespread critical reflection upon the men fit to fight for and forge an empire where Alexander once conquered, was the response to Grote's Alexander:

> Perhaps a few years ago Englishmen would not generally have felt any great interest in studying the Asiatic campaigns of Alexander, and would not have been inclined to set at their true value those qualities of mind and body which enabled him to crowd into a few years triumphs of fabulous magnitude, and to traverse with victorious host the whole known world to the East of the Mediterranean sea.[774]

Even Grote had not denied Alexander his place as the foremost example of military leadership and tactical acumen. He noted that 'all his greatest qualities were fit for use only against enemies'. Presumably this was meant as a criticism, but it was this type of reading of Alexander that was seized upon by his reviewers.[775] In contrast to the list of logistical and administrative blunders and the inability of the British and allied forces to defeat the Russians decisively, was the 'unrivalled excellence of Alexander as a military man'. He mustered and organised his forces with 'scientific organisation on a large scale', took 'careful dispositions' and made 'vigilant precaution in guarding against possible reverses, and abundant resource in

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Spectator's article 'Why our army suffered in 1854-55' which catalogued the failures and called for further enquiries – *Why our Army Suffered in 1854-55* (1856e: 165-6).

[773] For incompetence see Edgerton (1999: 71-100). For the media aftermath to the battle of Sevastopol, see Royle (1999: 246-7).

[774] *'Grote's History of Greece - Volume XII'* 1856b: 249.

[775] Grote 1856: 12.352.

adapting himself to new contingences.'[776] This article appeared just weeks after the magazine had called for an army that could 'bend to the exigencies of the moment' and for men that had the capacity to bend 'systems' in order to confront and overcome possible problems.[777] Those in government were asked to learn a critical lesson from their predecessor:

> The lesson to be learned from Alexander's campaigns is one of universal applicability. It is, that no vastness of resources, no personal bravery even of soldiers and generals, can withstand the assaults of military genius and disciplined force. The side on which these latter exist in preponderating power will in the long run conquer; and they cannot be improvised.[778]

Organisation and excellent leadership were attributes called for, as well as the reform of the army. No less was at stake than 'perhaps the whole future history of England and of the world' and this '[depended] on the extent to which we have been taught this lesson, and have taken it to heart as the basis of practical conduct.'[779] The necessities of fighting Russia required 'great soldiers' to be considered 'as essential as great statesmen to the wellbeing of a community' and there was no better example than that of the conqueror and his conquering forces.[780] The response to the Crimean War occasioned an acknowledgement of a shift in geopolitical focus towards the lands that Alexander had conquered. But it was also an argument for Britain following Alexander's model of martial prowess. Alexander's name connoted two meanings – "fear" and "inspiration" - in the context of imperial wars. In this writer's imagination, if not more broadly, Alexander was a hero to embrace unequivocally in pursuit and protection of empire.

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[776] Grote 1856: 12.351.
[777] *Why our Army Suffered in 1854-55* (1856e: 166).
[778] *'Grote's History of Greece - Volume XII'* 1856b: 249.
[779] *'Grote's History of Greece - Volume XII'* 1856b: 249.
[780] *'Grote's History of Greece - Volume XII'* 1856b: 249.

5.2. General Conclusions

The works considered in this thesis support an argument broadly consonant with the two overarching trends paraphrased in the introduction. The first is the "turn away" from Alexander as a paradigm. This process started in the late-seventeenth century and reached its apogee in the work of Henry Fielding.[781] This thesis has adjusted the timing of this process to show that these arguments only triumphed after the Glorious revolution. It has also more clearly defined the reasons for Alexander becoming a circumscribed figure for martial virtue. In the context of the debate upon civic virtue that took place within parameters consonant with a notion of the common good, there were three broad moves made against Alexander. First, writers sought to redefine the notion of martial virtue and moved away from selfish ambition and towards warriors that provided service to liberty and the polity. Second, Alexander was undermined by unfavourable comparison with British heroes who upheld national values. Finally, and most damagingly, he was attacked by a line of argument that equated conquest with criminality. This thesis has also demonstrated how this final critique was deployed as one of many interpretations of Alexander during the later debates on Hastings and Napoleon.

The second trend is a "turn toward" Alexander, a process that previously had been seen to begin with Montesquieu and to culminate in Alexander's place as an imperial exemplar for some writers of the Scottish Enlightenment.[782] The current work has added to our understanding of the intellectual roots of this development by identifying how Alexander was "Other" to avowed British ideologies of empire in the early to mid-eighteenth century. Defoe and Lyttelton, furthermore, have been shown to be precursors to the visionary Alexander that emerged strongly in the last decades of the century. Chapter three also provided a complementary if more vexed narrative of Britain's identification with Alexander. British

[781] Brauer 1980; Wild 2004.
[782] Briant 2005.

imperial figures were initially separated from Alexander, but from the mid-century onwards this conception became unsustainable thanks to contemporary controversies of empire. The example of Hastings especially exposes the range and malleability of Alexander's receptions in late-eighteenth century discourse on empire.

In order to complement the "turn to" and "turn towards" argument, the task of these general conclusions is to offer alternative routes through Alexander's reception in the eighteenth century. This will be achieved by returning to the central questions outlined at the outset of this thesis: why was Alexander conceived and on what grounds was he accepted or rejected in British political thought, and how and why his reputation changed through this process.

From Giovanni Botero to Napoleon, the foremost reason for thinking with Alexander during this period was because he had a reputation for martial achievement. The discourse on martial virtue that underpins Alexander's reception can be split into three stages. These stages emerge in roughly chronological order, but they are neither discrete nor mutually exclusive. The use of Alexander as a mirror after the Renaissance was concerned with how to steer aristocrats away from vice and facilitate martial success. Alexander complemented this discourse by the sheer range of his character, while his prestige as an example was underwritten by his impressive martial achievements. In England, by the end of the seventeenth century, the *vir illustris* was no longer in the ascendency and the model exemplified by Alexander provoked considerable controversy. In the 1690s, the discussion of martial achievements was sharpened by the test of whether warriors were in accord with civic utility. The compartmentalised Alexander that had been used for teaching virtue was no longer functional. Ambition, courage and victories were not enough for those questioning the role of the hero within civic society; one particular aim of "conquest"– to protect republican values - became the predominant measure of martial success. The most important innovation at the turn of the eighteenth century was the establishment of

utility as the primary rubric for judging martial heroes, both ancient and modern. To some, arms were to be exclusively the instrument of liberty and Alexander was shorn of his power to impress when tested against this requirement. Further debarring his paradigm was his criminalisation when considered in the context of humanity (most stridently expressed by Fielding). The final indictment against him was the inherent emptiness of his type of fame. This process was facilitated by a changing, more critical attitude towards the past that directed Alexander's detractors towards the Alexander of the Stoics.

The debarring of Alexander was also apparent in conceptions of empire in the early decades of the eighteenth century: martial virtue was bifurcated into ancient conquerors and British commercialism. The former were clearly counter to British ideologies of empire, while the latter category of empire embodied utility on comparable terms to descriptions of civic virtue. The modes and ends of conquerors became troubled once again when British politicians and commentators noticed how land-empire was clashing with the ideals of commercial imperialism. In the work of William Robertson especially, Alexander's martial ambition was re-imagined as a vision of progressive empire. The perception that Alexander's commercialism allowed polity, object of conquest and humanity to be preserved and bettered, redeemed him from the position that Henry Fielding, amongst others, so despised. There is one caveat to this last point. Robertson's work was a lagging indicator of a change towards this new way of thinking about Alexander. Late-eighteenth century hand-wringing on empire forced the visionary Alexander to the sharp-end of political discourse, but this concept had begun to emerge as soon as the test of commercial utility was applied to his conquests. Defoe had almost granted Alexander status as a visionary and Lyttelton had defended his empire well before it became apparent that Britain was sailing rather too close to his example.

In addition to this framework, there are two periods where even an enhanced narrative of Alexander's waxing and waning repute is not

adequate. First, at the beginning of the "turn away" from Alexander, he was arguably at his most celebrated, as evidenced by dedications to prominent aristocrats. Whether works that praised him so stridently were provocation for succeeding generation of writers to damn him cannot yet be confirmed. Further study is required to establish more precisely the cause of such a phenomenon, the function of the dedications, whether they divided upon partisan lines and why they disappeared after the Glorious Revolution. Post-Restoration England yielded strongly opposed views upon Alexander and this division was heightened due to the extreme constitutional unrest and political factionalism. Second, the works surrounding the trial of Hastings belie any simple application of a "turn towards" thesis. In comparison to the homogenous responses that characterised his earlier reception, they operate from various sides of political debate and deploy his repute differently from a variety of perspectives. The protean Alexander of the 1780s and 90s could be hated and idealised.

These two periods evidence how Alexander's repute could function as a nexus over which a multi-vocal political discourse could be carried rather than as a singular paradigm adapting and bending according to intellectual fashions. A working argument is that Alexander's repute was circumscribed at times of consensus on martial virtue and then proliferated during moments of acute controversy. From the Renaissance, Alexander was politically uncontroversial as a figure for teaching, but the Restoration saw his reputation fractured along partisan lines. After the 1690s, a general consensus developed according to broadly republican precepts, albeit with a few exceptions (such as Handel's *Alessandro*). At the time of Hastings' trial, controversies of empire had fractured his repute between various ideas about the nature of British imperialism. The febrile crucible provoked by Napoleon was similarly conducive to conceptual proliferation. Finally, in the nineteenth century, a consensus was re-established (this phenomenon will be addressed in detail below).

Tracking the changes in the connotations of the terms conquest and empire in their application to Alexander reinforces this argument. Conquest was initially aristocratic achievement in warfare and the result of learning from the success and mistakes of great men like Alexander. After civil wars, Restoration and Glorious Revolution, a new consensus on martial virtue was established. Conquest for civic service and protection of liberty (for example, Marlborough) was conceived as opposing conquest for personal gain which was circumscribed. This consensus was similarly displayed in the distinction between commercial empire and other means of expansion. Commercialism was conceived to be practised by British merchants, protected by sea-power and led to progress at home and for mankind. Land conquest and empire (typified by Alexander, France and Spain) threatened liberty at home and abroad, and were circumscribed. This dichotomy was then complicated during the later century. By the time of Hastings, commercial empire was loaded with negative connotations, previously thought to be the preserve of land conquest. Through Alexander's visionary example, a conquest driven empire could also claim the commercial and ideological high-ground (for example, by Beddoes and Robertson). Alexander could stand for immoral conquest or the enlightened ideal of empire and was variously a critique through direct parallel, an inferior example to demonstrate Britain's superiority or paragon used to inspire better conduct.

A further important conclusion is why Alexander's repute changed. Aside from the factionalism and politics that often pushed writers to explore the limits of the paradigm, two factors must be considered as underpinning his protean reception. The first is the role played by contemporary Alexanders. The Stuarts provoked fear of tyranny and drew focus upon Alexander's despotism and manners, while the aristocrats of the seventeenth century drew their admirers into praise and celebration of his life. The new republican heroes of the early Hanoverian period, both ancient and modern, provoked a downgrading of his place in the canon of heroes; other contemporaries, like Charles of Sweden, reinforced Stoic assumptions about

conquerors like Alexander. Different genres similarly accommodated differing sources and premises, and refreshed conclusions about his utility as a model. Until the end of the seventeenth century, works - like that of Samuel Clarke - portrayed both virtue and vice, and accommodated the full range of the narrative of his life. They helped to ensure that the rich inheritance from the medieval world remained to underpin his reception in more selective works. The partisan politics and literary forms of the Restoration overturned the compartmentalised Alexander of the Renaissance. Dedications to prominent individuals emphasised his virtues and martial glory. The drama of Nathaniel Lee or satirical poetry of Dryden did the same for his vices because they focused attention upon the salacious and the terrifying aspects of his character. Various formats for *comparatio* were highly agonistic and these complemented the many self-satisfied declarations of British virtue. This is, of course, not to argue that each was inherently suited to portraying one type or interpretation of Alexander. Dialogue, for example, was a similarly agonistic format. In the hands of Fielding, Alexander was pilloried, but for Lyttelton it allowed a stern defence of his record to be mounted.

Describing a history of commerce in concert with an attempt to conceive of past and contemporary empires had a particularly important and lasting effect upon Alexander's reception. In the context of a universal narrative of history, Alexander's utility was redeemed because his conquests were placed in contrast with what preceded and followed him rather than simply in his immediate social and political context. This thesis agrees with Briant's summation that we must look far beyond Droysen for an understanding of the genesis of notions of Alexander's legacy. Lyttelton, but especially Defoe and Robertson, placed Alexander's aims and legacy in the vanguard of their analysis, a move that has been rarely overlooked by subsequent historians. We can even go back as far as the destructive Alexander of Divine Providence to look for proto-descriptions of his universal utility. But with Robertson's specific focus on the improvements and aims of Alexander, there was a clear paradigm shift from the early-century. Although Ramsey and

Lyttelton attempted it, it was difficult to conceptualise a conqueror as a constructive force in the context of a polity where selfish "Alexanders" were at best useless or at worse an active threat. Exploration of the transnational effects of Alexander's conquests in the context of a universal narrative of human development superseded critiques that cited Alexander's failure to answer the needs of society. In the context of empire, Alexander's actions were reconfigured amidst a complex geographical, social and political matrix, where pragmatics and realities clashed with, and often overturned, idealism. In terms of trade and historical process, Alexander's selfish singularity could be conceived as dangerous, as evidenced by the reaction to Hastings. But by the 1780s Alexander could be a figure of pragmatic empire and even as a visionary.

Napoleon requires special attention, reflecting how he disrupted Alexander's already complex reputation. Of the many contemporary Alexanders considered in this thesis his actions were the most provocative. Napoleon's stellar achievements were instructive of the dangers of Great Men, eliciting a conceptual discord that saw writers try various means of making sense of the man. The coincidence of the way and *where* he unsettled Britain meant that Alexander became an acutely relevant figure in imperial discourse. This would have lasting consequences. Whitehall and the critics were driven to "think with", if not embrace, the archetypical land conqueror once more, presaging the re-emergence of Alexander as a pathfinder for British decision making. As Asia became a contested space of critical importance to Britain's empire, Alexander was no longer the preserve of aristocrats and academics engaging in parlour generalship or debating moral hazard.

Finally, although chapters three and four provide evidence for the fracturing of Alexander's reputation in the last decades of the eighteenth century, a consensus on Alexander emerges in the nineteenth century. From John Gillies in the 1780s to Gustav Droysen and Connop Thirlwall in the 1830s, Alexander's empire became synonymous with progress as it brought

civilisation through the Hellenism it spread throughout Asia. George Grote's volume of 1856 was the objection to Alexander that proves the existence of this consensus.[783] He controversially claimed Alexander as a force that destroyed Greece and retarded world progress, but maintained the convention that judgements on Alexander were to be made upon his individual utility in the context of a narrative of human progress. In keeping with Briant's opinion that studying historiography will show the continuities and origins of certain themes and trends in the study of Alexander, the first three chapters of this thesis provides provocation for future exploration of this phenomenon.[784] The notion of Alexander's utility was forged in the context of a debate on civic virtue, a debate that ran parallel to a conceptualisation of progress that emerged from historiography of world or Greek history. Future studies should further examine the depth of the relationship between historiography, empire and British civic values and the potential correspondences and dissonances between their constructions of Alexander's utility.

This hinterland also brings into further relief the important issue of why the "turn to" Alexander occurred in the nineteenth century. Warwick Ball cites the mid-nineteenth century as the period when 'the British empire for the first time overlapped' with that of Alexander, during wars on the north-west frontier of India, and cites this historical coincidence as the inspiration for British identification with the Macedonian empire.[785] Hagerman sees this as occurring earlier and emphasizes the depth of cultural penetration that Alexander achieved by the nineteenth century:

> 'They [the British] saw themselves re-enacting, at a two millennia remove, Alexander's explorations, conquests, and ultimately even his world-historical mission...[reading Curtius] was also something like an act of communion with an historical

[783] Vasunia (2007) or Demetriou (1999, 2001).
[784] Briant 2009a.
[785] Ball 2011: 129-130. His observation that the spike in production of editions of Quintus Curtius coincided with that of wars in the border regions is sound for example.

> predecessor, whose career of exploration, conquest, and 'civilisation', offered varying degrees of knowledge, rationalisation, and inspiration to those involved in Britain's imperial project.'[786]

As Hagerman summarises, not only can the general educated reading public be assumed to have knowledge of Alexander, but the men of the East Indian Company (later Indian Civil Service) would have had a background in Classics and Alexander was one of the topics likely to have been covered.[787] Both articles emphasize the unique depth of nineteenth century receptions of Alexander and tie this to the specific geographical coincidence of British imperialism in this period. Confirmed by the narrative in section 5.1, these are important factors in why Alexander became such a ubiquitous paradigm. But this thesis has shown that cultural penetration had been a social constant for over a century, even if the level of Alexander consciousness increased in the nineteenth century. Geographical coincidence had, furthermore, been apparent from the 1780s. In the 1790s and the 1800s, finally, Hastings and Napoleon brought to the fore as many problems with using Alexander as pragmatic and idealistic advantages.

The conception of martial virtue and an understanding of the role of the hero in the context of imperialism must therefore be important avenues for further consideration of why Alexander was redeemed. William Robertson's appraisal of the potential for Empire in India, as Briant argues, came from a sense of respect for non-European history, civilisation and a desire for empire to fulfil a function of improvement (in trade and civilisation). Conversely, can the use of Alexander be considered as a statement of the worth of the autonomous individual, acting as a powerful external cultural

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[786] Hagerman 2009: 352.

[787] Hagerman 2009: 345-7. 'Greek and Latin were instrumental to these efforts to create a class of imperialist "gentlemen" ideally drawn from Oxford or Cambridge, schooled in the highest traditions of ancient universities, and endowed with good status and character.' Hagerman gives a detailed account of the broad access to scholarship on Alexander in this period. Translations of classical texts were abundant as were popular histories and the regular production of detailed scholarly works on Greece with the works of William Mitford and J.B. Bury bookending the century, with the monumental work of George Grote in the middle (1842-1856).

force? Although General Johnson or Marlborough became representative of the liberty and progress of a nation, they were still celebrated as individual agents of British power. In Alexander, Britain had a model of a hero of imperial conquest and a premise for the utility of a dominant imperial power. Hastings' schemes of expansion and individual power bases were questioned and tempered by newly minted Indian state apparatus in Calcutta and Whitehall. But figures such as Arthur Wellesley or Auckland in Afghanistan show that the nineteenth century was not going to be without conquest or conquering heroes.[788] To understand further the ties between Alexander and empire, further work must consider the conception of individual virtue and its dissonance and correspondence with national achievement and character. To underpin Hagerman's argument that the activities of British agents were due to a personal and national identification with Alexander, one must consider further the place and role of heroes in education and society. Hagerman contends that a sense of superiority was underpinned by narratives of Alexander: was this conceived as inherent to the whole or just a part? Specifically, how did using his example relate to discourse on class and education? Did petty Alexanders (like Hastings) cause friction when viewed in context with the whole? Similarly, Britain had its own genealogy of imperial heroes from Marlborough to Wellington and villains, such as Napoleon or Hastings, to draw upon. Were these a filter for, or were they filtered through, Alexander's paradigm? The justification of imperialism was potentially entwined with the return of the all-powerful aristocrat, one who could change the world by force of will and power of arms. Napoleon's legacy was evident in the response to the threat of invasion that was sporadically revived during the Great Game. In order to understand the subsequent conception of prominent individuals and conquest in political discourse in the early-nineteenth century, scholarship might start by

[788] An argument based upon Bayly (1989: 132-4).

examining further the afterlives of Napoleon and Alexander in constructions of martial virtue.[789]

The following conclusion is informed by the brief narrative outlined in section 5.1 and an attempt to provoke answers to these questions. From the Renaissance, the aristocratic hero was a figure in concert with the health of the polity. In the eighteenth century the self-fashioning aristocrat came under attack and was dismantled. Martial virtue was still important, but subordinated to the demands of civic society. There were two complementary routes by which the hero was reinvented. The first was via considering him an agent of historical and human development. Alexander the visionary, it was envisaged, would have changed the world and India especially if fate had not cruelly intervened. Even if Grote saw his intervention as a negative one, the idea of Alexander as a far-sighted, world-changer stuck. It was apparent in the work of W.W. Tarn in 1920 and still lingers in the biographies discussed at the very beginning of this work. Other contemporary Alexanders, but especially Napoleon, offered a different kind of impetus. They demonstrated and reiterated the expediency of great warriors in the execution of imperialism. The brief example given at the end of chapter 5.1, particularly suggests that the admiring glances toward Napoleon and Alexander at the turn of the century would turn into an imperative to replicate their lead in the context of imperialism. Once, the 'beautiful and blooming Hero' of the Chamber of Fame was a threat to the nation's values and liberties. By the mid-nineteenth century, acting like Alexander had become a requirement of imperial success and national character.

[789] For instance Grote (1856: 12.69-70) and Mapletoff (1877: 82).

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